THE CHURCH OF EGYPT

VOLUME II.

THE STORY

OF THE

CHURCH OF EGYPT

BEING AN OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF
THE EGYPTIANS UNDER THEIR SUCCESSIVE MASTERS
FROM THE ROMAN CONQUEST UNTIL NOW

BY

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AUTHOR OF 'A STRANGE JOURNEY' 'A BLACK JEWEL' ETC.

'Him that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father and before His angels. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches'

IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. II.

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THE STORY

OF

THE CHURCH OF EGYPT

PART II.—continued.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CONQUEST OF EGYPT BY THE FATIMITES

964 680 355 In 964-5 (A.H. 355) the second son of El Ikshid died, and Kafur at once assumed the sovereignty in his own name. But within two years he died also, and Egypt, wasted with famine and pestilence, and with a child of eleven (grandson of El Ikshid) on the throne, presented an easy prey to the Fatimite Arabs.

Indeed, there was no attempt at resistance. The Greek general, who had of course been educated in the faith of Islam, and is known by the Arab name of Johar (also spelt Djauher), simply marched through the country and took possession of Fostat in 968-9 (A.H. 358). The Christians, as usual, looked with relief and hope on any change of masters. The Turks and Arabs, who had writhed under the yoke of a Soudani and a Jew (the most trusted instrument of Kafur), welcomed the general of the great Kaliph Moez with ready submission. There remained only the Nubian

kingdom, which refused to acknowledge the new Moslem usurper; and Johar was not insensible to the dangers of an invasion from the south. He wrote a letter to George, King of Nubia, inviting him, with politely veiled hints of what might follow a refusal, to embrace the faith and resume the neglected payment of the slave tribute to the present master of Egypt. This letter he despatched by the hands of three ambassadors, the chief of whom was a man named Abdallah Ahmed ebn Solaim, who was a native of Assuan. This man afterwards wrote a history of Nubia, describing what he had seen upon this journey and all that he had been able to learn from others. His testimony to the state of the Christian kingdoms at this time is so important that certain extracts are here given, taken from the French translation of M. Quatremère.

After carefully describing the southern limits of the Moslem power he speaks of the province which reached from a fortress six miles south of Assuan to the second cataract. This, he says, was governed by the Viceroy of the King of Nubia, and in this province Moslems were allowed to settle and trade freely. He mentions that hardly any of these Moslems, who had long been settled among the Christians, could speak Arabic properly. He speaks of it as a well-watered, carefully cultivated country abounding in vineyards. In fact Nubia, though it had indirectly suffered much from the Arab conquest of Egypt and the enforced slave trade, evidently seemed to the Moslem ambassador a haven of peace and plenty after the ruined and famine-stricken Egypt, through which he had travelled. Beyond this province no one, Moslem or otherwise, was allowed to pass into the southern provinces without the express permission of the Viceroy. Any in-

fringement of this rule was punished with instant death. But indeed the next stage of the journey, the ambassador pathetically complains, was a natural barrier of terrible rocks, far-reaching desert, and roads along which it was impossible for a man to ride. However, he says, it is from this district that the Nubians draw the precious stone with which they polish jewels. From the third cataract southward Ahmed ebn Solaim has nothing but praise for both the Christian kingdoms of Makorrah and Alouah. Almost all through his description he calls the King of Nubia the King of Makorrah, which was the name of the southern half of his kingdom. The capital of the kingdom, he informs us, is called Dongola,[1] and it is fifty days' journey from Assuan. The further he penetrated, the more the fertility and the safety of the country astonished him.

Within the space of less than two days' journey (he exclaims) we passed through nearly thirty towns with fine houses, churches, monasteries, numberless palm groves, vineyards, gardens, and wide-spreading fields, besides herds of camels of great beauty and breeding. From Dongola to the frontier of the kingdom of Alouah the distance is greater than from Dongola to Assuan (he evidently followed all the windings of the Nile); and through all this territory the towns, the villages, the flocks and herds, the fields of grain, the vineyards, and the palm groves are infinitely greater in number than in the province which borders on the Moslem territories.

He remarks that in this province, from Shenkir several roads lead to Suakim and Massowa and other places on the Red Sea. He was told, he says, that the Nile, which further south divides itself into two rivers,

[1] This refers to old Dongola.

the White and Blue, came from great lakes in the country of the blacks; but he reserves his opinion about the great lakes. The division into two rivers he saw himself, for he explains that 'Souiah,' the capital of the kingdom of Alouah, was situated at the confluence of the two rivers. He speaks of this town, which has since been rebuilt and is known in modern times under the name of Khartoum, in the following terms:—

> This town is adorned by magnificent buildings, great houses, churches enriched with gold, and gardens. It has one quarter in which live a great number of Moslems. The King of Alouah is more powerful and has more numerous armies than the King of Makorrah; also the country is larger and more fertile. It does not, however, produce many palms or vines.

He alludes to the manufacture of beer and the cheapness of meat, besides the excellence of horses and camels. He mentions the fact that all the Christians belonged to the Jacobite (or National) Church of Egypt, and that their bishops, like the bishops of Abyssinia, were subordinate to the Patriarch of Egypt. Their books were written in Greek, but they translated them into their own language. He remarks that the authority of the King of Alouah is absolute. Whatever he orders, whether just or unjust, is obeyed. 'This king,' he adds, 'wears a crown of gold, for this metal is very abundant in his dominions.' The 'brownies' were apparently well known in the Soudan at that time, for he records a curious story told him about the sowing of the crops, which, he assures his readers, does not depend on the report of the country folk. 'All the Moslem merchants who trade in this country assured me that it was true.'

At the time of sowing (he says) they go into the fields, mark out the plot to be sown, throw a little of the seed in each corner, and pour the rest in a heap in the middle, by which they set a cup of beer. On the morrow they find the field sown and the beer drunk. In the same way at the harvest they cut a few blades, leave them with beer in the field, and on the morrow all the grain will be cut for them. But if by mistake in weeding the fields they root up some of the grain and leave it, on the morrow all the grain will be pulled up. The people say they are genii, and that some of the inhabitants of the country can make them do anything they choose.[1]

Ahmed ebn Solaim relates that at the Court of Alouah he saw several men from far-distant countries who were neither Mohammedan nor Christian. Most of them, he said, believed in a God, but also in the sun, moon, and stars; some were fire-worshippers, and others adored a tree or even an animal.

One day (he says) at an audience of the king I saw a man whom I asked of his country. He told me that it was three months' journey from this place. I asked him of his religion, and he replied that there was but one God, who was equally mine, that of the king, and all created men.

Being further questioned, he said that God lived in heaven, and that when any misfortune threatened them in their country, such as pestilence or cattle disease, they went up solemnly into a mountain to pray, and their prayers were always heard. Ahmed ebn Solaim asked if they acknowledged no Prophet; and on his replying in the negative, spoke to him of the missions of Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed, and the wonders that they had worked. 'If what you say is true,' replied the old man, 'it deserves

[1] M. Quatremère finds nothing incredible in this story. He suggests that the supposed genii were probably monkeys.

to be believed. For myself I would believe what they taught if I had seen the works which they did.'

Ahmed ebn Solaim says nothing of the way his proposals were received at the southern Court, and we may conclude that they met with no success. Nor did the embassy effect much at the Court of Dongola, though in both places they were received with the greatest politeness. The King of Nubia assembled all the bishops and wise men of his kingdom to meet the Moslem ambassadors, and permitted perfect freedom of discussion; but himself, he read in the assembly the answer which he had already written to Johar, inviting him to become a Christian, and saying nothing about the slave tribute. He pointed out that his father and his ancestors had always faithfully observed their treaties with the Moslem conquerors of Egypt, and intimated that he was ready to consider the terms of a fresh alliance with the new invaders.

Whereupon Ahmed ebn Solaim made a long speech, which he afterwards wrote down, asking the King of Nubia whether he really supposed that he could stand against the power of Islam, and enumerating the great things that had been done by the Moslems since the coming of their Prophet. It is evident, however, that he could make no impression on the king, and that the report which he carried back to Johar convinced that general that he would do wisely not to attempt the conquest of the Soudan.

Ahmed ebn Solaim further relates that while he was at the Court of the King of Nubia the great day of sacrifice arrived. He called to him the Moslems of Dongola, to the number apparently of about sixty, and went out in

solemn procession, with beat of drums and sound of trumpets, to keep the feast. The king's courtiers, he says, tried to persuade their king to forbid this public performance of Mohammedan rites in his country, but the king rebuked their intolerance. 'This man has, for good motives, left his country and his family,' he reminded them. 'This day is a solemn feast in his religion; if he wishes to celebrate it with as much pomp and ceremony as possible, I will not refuse him the satisfaction.'

This act of Christian courtesy is the last we hear of King George. The Moslem ambassador returned to his own country, and for the rest of the century the Christian kingdoms were left in peace.

CHAPTER XIV

THE BUILDING OF CAIRO

A.D. 971
A.M. 687
A.H. 361

For nearly a hundred years the Fatimite Kaliphs governed Egypt in person, and at first, as usual, the unfortunate inhabitants, especially the Christian minority, found relief in their change of masters. The Mohammedan Greek who ruled for three years in his master's name relieved the taxes, enforced public order and safety, and above all cleared out the long-neglected canals and gave the famine-stricken country a chance to recover itself. In 971 (A.H. 361) the Nile rose once more to its full height, and this was regarded by the Egyptians as a sign of God's favour towards the new dynasty.

There now existed on the east bank of the Nile three cities—distinct, yet almost touching one another. To the south lay Babylon, occupied almost entirely by those Egyptians who clung to the Christian faith and had no more dealings than they could help with the Moslem. Already they had made the old Roman fortress their peculiar stronghold, and built their cathedral on one of its bastions, whence it dominated and still dominates the whole town. Though the oldest, and in Moslem estimation the least important city, Babylon was still the only capital of Egypt known to the Western world.

Next came the Arab city of Fostat, built for his

followers by the politic Amr; and north-east of that the Turkish city founded by Ahmed ebn Touloun, which was farther from the river and nearer to the Mokattam hills than the other two. This was more like a huge barrack, and was generally called Masr-el-Askar[1] ('of the Soldiers'), whereas the term Masr employed alone signified properly the country of Egypt, but was often loosely applied to designate the two Moslem cities together. In bidding farewell to his successful general the Kaliph Moez, turning to the sheikhs who were to accompany the expedition, had uttered the following prophecy:—

> By God, if Johar were to march alone he would conquer Egypt. You shall enter Fostat in your ordinary clothes, you shall have no need to give battle to the inhabitants thereof, you shall inhabit the forsaken palace of the children of Touloun, but you shall found another city, surnamed El Kahirah ('the Victorious'), to which the whole world shall own submission.

Johar, having carried out the first part of this programme, lost no time in undertaking the second. The foundations of the new town—the nucleus of the present Cairo—were laid in 970 (A.H. 359), and the original walls were made to include Masr-el-Askar. The most solemn ceremonies were observed on the occasion, the materials were laid ready, the workmen ranged in their places, and then all waited in silence the signal of the astronomers, who watched the Star of Victory. At the precise moment the order was given, and with loud cries the men fell

[1] It is this city, Masr-el-Askar, which was afterwards known to the Egyptians as Masr-el-Antika, or the Old Masr. The name of Old *Cairo* is absurdly inaccurate in itself, and totally misapplied by the street authorities and the dragomans of the present day to Fostat and Babylon.

simultaneously to work. The building was carried on so rapidly that within two years the Kaliph was able to come and take possession. He did not come direct from Kirwan, but spent several months in Sicily and Sardinia, which were now part of his dominions; then returning to Tripoli he came to Alexandria, and in the year 972–3 (A.H. 362) he arrived in Cairo, bringing with him great treasure, the spoils of the various countries which he had conquered.

A new mosque of course was to be built, superior in magnificence and sanctity to the great mosques of the older cities—Amr and Ebn Touloun. The Gama el Azhar, still the most important university of the Moslem world, was founded in the same year of the Kaliph's arrival. But the Kaliph Moez had not the religious scruples of his predecessor Ebn Touloun, and of the forest of clustering pillars in this far-famed mosque there is scarcely one that has not been taken from some Christian church. They are not however good specimens, and there are hardly any beautiful capitals amongst them.

Owing to the influence of Johar, this mosque was endowed far beyond any previous one with facilities for learning. It was provided with a valuable library, and professors of grammar, of literature, of 'theology,' jurisprudence, medicine, astronomy, mathematics, and history were endowed from its revenues. Pupils thronged from all the countries in the Saracen dominions, and through this medium much of the learning of the ancient Egyptians was spread abroad and, not unnaturally, attributed to the Arabs themselves by the Western world.

In the same year (975) the Kaliph and the Patriarch of Egypt died, and the former was succeeded by his son,

who rejoiced in the names of Nasr ebn Moez Abu Mansur el Aziz il dyn Allah, but who may be briefly referred to as El Aziz. One of his wives was a Christian Egyptian of the Greek Church, who acquired great influence over him, even to the extent of ordering that by his mandate alone her two brothers Arsenius and Jeremiah should be received as Patriarchs by the Melkite Churches of Jerusalem and Alexandria. Under similar circumstances the National Church had chosen persecution rather than submission, but not even a protest is recorded from the Greek Church in consequence of this indignity.

On the death of the National Patriarch Mena II, the bishops and the Alexandrian clergy called a synod in the church of St. Sergius and St. Bacchus[1] at Babylon, to consider the appointment of his successor. A Syrian merchant of high character named Ephraim, who was also known to have influence with the Kaliph, happened to enter the church while their deliberations were still proceeding, and was at once unanimously greeted as the person marked out for the Patriarchate. He was a layman, and in the conditions of Eastern society it is not possible that he was unmarried, though he may have been a widower; but his character fully justified the instinctive choice of the bishops. He only governed the Church for three years, but during that time he abolished the practice of simony—as the reception of ordination and consecration fees has always been called among the Egyptians—and set himself earnestly to reform the morals of the Church, which had suffered greatly from association with the Moslems. Concubines seemed to have become almost as common

[1] This is the church to which all the tourists are taken, with the tiny church of Sitte Miriam underneath it.

among the nominal Christians as among the Mohammedans, particularly among those who held office under Government, and whom therefore it was more dangerous to offend. Ephraim, however, made no distinction of persons, and fell a martyr to his righteous zeal for reform. One of the most powerful officials at Court kept several concubines, and Ephraim, having remonstrated with him to no purpose, pronounced against him the solemn sentence of excommunication. Abu el Serur had not apparently believed that the Patriarch would proceed to extremities against him, and in his rage he added the sin of sacrilegious murder to that of adultery by causing the Patriarch to be poisoned.

This Patriarch Ephraim[1] won so much upon the favour of the Moslem Kaliph during his short reign that El Aziz desired him to ask some favour and it should be granted. Ephraim asked for leave to resume the site and rebuild the church of St. Mercurius,[2] which in a former persecution had been ruined and seized by the Moslems; and the Kaliph at once commanded that the church should be given up. Abu Salih gives the following account of the restoration :—

When the Patriarch was about to begin to work upon this church, the common people of the Moslems attacked him. For the church had fallen into ruin, and nothing was left to mark it except the walls, which were also in a state of decay; and it had been turned into a storehouse for sugar canes. So the command was issued that it should be restored by

[1] In some lists of the Patriarchs this man is called Abraham instead of Ephraim. As far as I can make out, the two names appear to be the same in Coptic, and the nearest resemblance to the pronunciation would be Aphrahem.

[2] Abu Sefayn.

the Patriarch, and that money should be allowed him from the treasury -as much as he should ask for. The Patriarch, however, took the decree, but returned the money with apologies, saying : 'God, to Whom be praise, Who has shown his great power, is able to assist in the erection of houses for His worship, and has no need of this world's money.' And he begged Al Aziz to restore the money to its place and not to force him to accept it ; so the Kaliph consented to his request. And when the Patriarch was hindered, by those who attacked him, from restoring the church to its original state, and when they raised disturbances and showed their indignation at the matter, news was brought to the Prince of the Faithful, Al-'Azîz-bi'lláh, that the common people would not allow the Patriarch to carry out the decree for the restoration of the church. Then Al-'Azîz commanded that a body of his troops and his Mamelukes should go and stand by during the rebuilding of the fabric, and should repulse any who tried to hinder it, and punish them as they deserved for opposing 'that we have decreed to them.' When the people saw this, they refrained from their attacks. Thus the work was begun.

Later on, Abu Salih informs us that a very large sum of money was brought to the Patriarch Ephraim by a member of the Church as a thank-offering, and thus funds were supplied for the completion of the work. At this time lived the celebrated historian Severus, who was Bishop of Ashmounayn (Hermopolis Magna). Unfortunately hardly any of his voluminous writings have been printed ; and of his historical chronicle, which was continued after his death by Bishop Michael of Tanis and by later Coptic writers, only one entire copy, I believe, is known to exist, though much of it has been preserved in the Latin work of Renaudot. Severus was probably appointed to his bishopric during the brief Patriarchate of Ephraim, whose

successor Philotheus, a monk of the monastery of St. Macarius, by no means bore the same high character.[1]

It is, however, during the Patriarchate of Philotheus that more than one conversion is recorded of Moslems to Christianity, and the story of one of these converts is given at some length and on good authority by Neale:—

Among the councillors of the Kaliph was a Mohammedan of noble birth, who had taken great pains with the education of his son Vasah. This son had a special turn for theology, had committed the Koran to memory, and was a bitter opponent of the Christians. One day his attention was attracted by a crowd which accompanied a criminal to execution, and he inquired of what crime the prisoner had been convicted. Being told that it was a Mohammedan who had embraced Christianity, and who was in consequence condemned to be burnt alive as an apostate, he pushed through the crowd and loaded his former co-religionist with reproaches for his madness in forsaking the pure religion of his fathers and acknowledging three Gods. The martyr calmly replied that he did not worship three Gods, but one in three persons, and further prophesied that Vasah himself would one day see the truth, acknowledge it, and suffer for it. Vasah, enraged beyond control at this prediction, drew off his slipper and followed the man to his death, beating him over the head and loading him with insults. He remained to watch the execution, but the bearing of the martyr made such an impression upon him that he was unable to shake it off. In the hope of doing so, and at the same

[1] Neale and Renaudot both talk of 'the crimes of Philotheus.' But on investigation we find that the worst charges his enemies could bring against him were that he was careless about church-going, fond of good dinners, and that he bathed twice a day.

time strengthening his own convictions, he shortly afterwards went on a pilgrimage to Mecca ; but even on the way his dreams were thrice disturbed by the vision of an aged monk who called him, if he valued the salvation of his soul, to rise up and follow him. Vasah confided his dream to his companions, who assured him that such diabolical illusions must not be considered for a moment.

The pilgrimage was accomplished, and Vasah was not far from Cairo, on his return home, when he got separated from his companions and lost his way. In this extremity, as evening drew on and he began to fear the wild beasts with which the deserts then abounded, a solitary horseman appeared and asked what he was doing alone in the desert. Vasah explained, and the horseman desired him to get up behind and he would take him to a place of safety. Vasah gladly availed himself of the offer, and the stranger took him to one of the Christian *deyrs* or strongholds between Fostat and Babylon, and left him for the night in a place which Vasah knew must be a Christian church.[1] At dawn of day the Sacristan came to prepare the church for morning prayer, and was alarmed to find a Mohammedan concealed in the building. At first he suspected him to be a thief; but when he heard the confused account which was all Vasah could give of himself, and observed that the treasures of the church were safe, he began to think the newcomer must be mad. Vasah asked the name of the church, and was told it was dedicated to St. Mercurius. The Sacristan readily showed the picture of the Saint, relating the story of his sufferings. Vasah either saw or fancied

[1] This church was the one just restored by Ephraim. It still exists, and is one of the most interesting to be seen near Cairo. It is now called by the Arabic nickname for St. Mercurius Abu Sefayn.

he saw a likeness between the picture and the horseman who had come to his rescue on the preceding evening, and at once intimated to the astonished Sacristan his intention of becoming a Christian. The Sacristan, unprepared for the emergency, urged Vasah to withdraw from the church before the service began, and conceal himself in a secret hiding-place for the time. He promised, however, to send the priest to him; and was as good as his word, though he feared greatly the evils it might bring upon the church of St. Mercurius, since it was evident that Vasah was a Mohammedan of rank.

Vasah was safely concealed in the Deyr until his baptism, the more easily that his friends and relations probably supposed him to have perished in the desert. After his baptism the priest who had received him into the church desired to send him to the convent of St. Macarius in Nitria for further instruction. Before he could depart, however, he was seen and recognised, in spite of his altered appearance, by some of his former friends, who told his father of their suspicion that he was not dead, but had become a Christian. Vasah's father at once caused search to be made, and Paul—as Vasah was called after his baptism—was arrested and taken to his home, where every effort was made to induce him to return to the Moslem religion. All their entreaties were in vain, however, and confinement without food for three days produced no results. In the end his relations, who loved him and besides dreaded the public disgrace that must fall upon them if they denounced him as an apostate, were induced to let him go. He retired at once into a monastery in Nitria, where he remained some time. But one of the monks having declared in his presence that the man

who did not openly profess his faith in the same city where he had once been known as an unbeliever could not be acceptable to God, he returned to Cairo and made public acknowledgment there of his Christianity. He was at first left to his relations, who were bitterly angry at his conduct, and left no stone unturned to secure a recantation. He was thrown into a dungeon for six days, and then exposed to the endearments and entreaties of the young wife whom he had married before his conversion, but who, with his only child, had been kept from him since. As he still remained firm, his poor wife was subjected in his sight to the insults of his brother, and as a last resort his father brought into his presence Paul's child, who was yet an infant. Once more he called upon Paul to give up his faith, and on his refusal Paul's father slew Paul's son with his own hand in Paul's presence.

Eventually he was given up to the authorities as an apostate. But great influence was exerted in his favour; his own pleadings did much to move the Kaliph, whose favourite wife was a Christian; and finally he was cast out unhurt. He retired into Upper Egypt, and formed a close friendship with the learned Bishop of Ashmounayn, but did not remain there. He is said to have withdrawn himself to the most distant part of the Soudan, and built a church to the Archangel Michael on the borders of Abyssinia. Eventually, however, he returned to seek admission into priest's orders at the hands of the Patriarch Philotheus. The latter demanded the now usual ordination fee, which Paul, from religious scruples, absolutely refused to pay. The unseemly dispute was only ended by the liberality of a man who happened to be present at the audience, and who himself paid the fee for Paul. When

the father of Vasah, or Paul, heard that his son had taken this further step his rage knew no bounds, and he hired a band of Arabs to pursue and murder him. Paul, however, was warned by the Christians, and retired to a place called Sandafa, in Lower Egypt. Here he was made treasurer of the church of St. Theodore, and died two years afterwards. The Moslems of the neighbourhood disturbed his dying hours with threats and curses, and he entreated the Patriarch's secretary to protect his dead body from their insults. This the secretary succeeded in doing, and it was he who afterwards related Paul's story to the chronicler, Michael of Tanis.

These conversions of prominent Moslems, though they must have rejoiced the hearts of all faithful Christians, did not make things easier for the Egyptian Church; but during the reign of El Aziz there was no persecution, though the Melkites were allowed to oppress the Monophysites, and their Patriarch Arsenius claimed and obtained one of their principal churches.

Abyssinia had been of late the scene of bloody civil wars, owing to the usurpation of the throne by two successive women, who had put to death all the descendants of the rightful line but one. This one was now pushing his fortunes in a desperate attempt to recover the throne of his ancestors, and thought it well to begin by making his peace with the Church. Apparently, all the ports were in the hands of the usurper, and he sent his appeal by the long and difficult land route to the King of Nubia, begging him to forward it to the Patriarch of Egypt. In this letter, part of which is still preserved, he sets forth in moving words the miseries of his country:—

These things, my brother (he writes in conclusion), I have written to you, in hope that the Christian religion may not be utterly destroyed and perish from among us. There have now been six Patriarchs[1] of Alexandria who have taken no care of our country, which has therefore remained desolate and without a pastor. Our bishops and our priests are dead, our churches are laid waste. Nor can we deny that we suffer these evils justly, on account of our crimes committed against our Metropolitan.

This letter was forwarded by the King of Nubia to the Patriarch, and a monk named Daniel, of the monastery of St. Macarius, was consecrated and despatched to Abyssinia. Here he was received with great joy, and shortly afterwards the young king's efforts were crowned with success, the usurping queen being deprived at once of her crown and her life.

[1] This number is incorrect. Cosmas was the last who had sent a Metropolitan into Abyssinia, between whom and Philotheus were only four—Macarius, Theophanius, Mena II., and Ephraim.

CHAPTER XV

THE PERSECUTION OF EL HAKIM

A.D. 996
A.M. 712
A.H. 386

In 996 (A.H. 386) El Aziz died and was succeeded by El Mansur Abu Ali el Hakim be amr Illah, commonly known as El Hakim.[1] This prince was only eleven years old when he succeeded to the throne, and the first ten years of his reign were days of peace and prosperity to the Christians, owing doubtless to the influence of El Hakim's Christian mother. But as El Hakim grew up to manhood, it became apparent that this state of things could not last. The prince was a man of weak intellect and unbounded vanity, with that absence of self-control which was natural to the circumstances. As he grew towards manhood he fell under the influence of the leader of a new sect among the Mohammedans, which had recently become popular in Egypt. This sect, it is said, forbade the special observance of Friday, the feasts of the greater and less Bairam, and even the pilgrimage to Mecca. Under this influence El Hakim built the mosque which still bears his name, and has been lately (1894) known as the Arab Museum. He also gave himself out to be a new and greater prophet, to whom Christians and Moslems alike should pay honour. He believed himself to be in direct communion with God; some say, indeed, that he

[1] The 'i' is long, as if it were 'ee.'

claimed to be, not, like Mohammed, the Prophet of God, but, like Jesus, the Incarnation of God. He was in the habit of ascending the Mokattam hills before break of day, without escort, to hold converse, as he said, with God. The Mohammedans appear to have more or less acquiesced in his pretensions, but the Christians regarded him as the most terrible form of Anti-Christ. In the preceding reign, and during the minority of El Hakim, a generation of Christians had grown up in greater freedom and security than they had known since the Arab conquest. The Christian influence at Court appears to have sheltered Melkite and Monophysite alike, the vexatious and humiliating restrictions on the Christians had fallen into disuse, and Christians were now to be seen riding horses, splendidly attired, owning slaves, and enjoying equal privileges with the servants of the Prophet. Conversions to Christianity indeed were not infrequent; the Christians had always been indispensable to the Government, and now it was apparently not an unknown thing for a Moslem to be compelled to sue for favour to a Christian. All this, of course, made the hatred of the Moslems burn more fiercely than ever against the despised race; but so long as the Sultan and his mother were well disposed towards them, nothing could be done. After the death of his mother, however, and the conversion of the Sultan to the new form of Islam which gave him divine honours, this state of affairs changed suddenly and terribly.

Before the persecution broke out, the Patriarch Philotheus, who had reigned twenty-four years, died in peace. He was celebrating the Holy Communion when he became suddenly silent. His attendant clergy,

supposing that he must have forgotten himself for the moment, supplied the next words; but the Patriarch remained incapable of speech, and the service was finished by another. Philotheus was supported to his house and died shortly afterwards. The Alexandrians were anxious to recommend another layman and merchant, but the bishops strongly disapproved; and finally Zacharias, treasurer of the monastery of St. Macarius, was chosen. As, however, the merchant Abraham had already been named to the Sultan as the next Patriarch, and was apparently anxious in any case to take holy orders, he was ordained, and shortly afterwards raised to the bishopric of Memphis.

Zacharias was a peace-loving man and hardly equal to the management of a bench of bishops who had unhappily deteriorated in character in these years of Court favour and free association with the Moslems. Under Philotheus the amount of the ordination fee offered had, it must be feared, been more considered than the character of the applicant; and owing to the curious custom of the Egyptian Church that no parish priest can be made a bishop, there was not even the safeguard of previous trial or experience. Zacharias retained constantly about him a sort of perpetual council of bishops, some of them his own relations, upon whom he leaned far too much. One of them, it is said, by falsehood and extortion amassed a sum of no less than twenty thousand pounds during his bishopric; and though Zacharias himself would not receive the ordination fees, which were so great a scandal, especially in a time of peace, his council of bishops invariably managed to extort them. A particularly disgraceful case of this kind led to disastrous consequences.

John, the parish priest of a village named Abu Nefer, near the monastery of St. Macarius, being ambitious of a bishopric, went in person to the Patriarch and requested that he should be appointed to one then vacant. Zacharias laid the request before his council, who unhesitatingly rejected it.[1] John, whose actions show him to have been unworthy, went off to the Court at Cairo, where he apparently had influence, intending to complain to the Kaliph Hakim. But the Kaliph was rapidly approaching that state of religious frenzy which was soon to bring such fearful calamities upon the country; and the Christians of the Court, who knew well how critical their position was becoming, persuaded the angry priest to forego his complaint, and sent him back with letters to Zacharias. In these they warned the Patriarch of the coming danger, and begged him for the sake of peace to grant John the bishopric which he coveted. The Patriarch, being absent in Wady Habib, committed the charge of John to his nephew Michael, Bishop of Saka or Xois, to be entertained till he should return and decide the matter. But Michael of Xois, fearing that the Patriarch would yield, and being determined that John should not be promoted, was wicked enough to hire a party of Arabs to waylay his guest, fling him into a dry well, and stone him. It so happened, however, that there was a cave at the bottom of the pit, into which John crept, and was therefore unhurt by the shower of stones which his assailants poured upon him. Eventually he escaped

[1] It is implied that they did so because John offered no money. But they had a canonical ground of refusal. A man to be a parish priest must be married; to be eligible for a bishopric he must be a monk.

and made his way to the Patriarch, to whom he narrated his wrongs.

Zacharias was so much moved by the wicked conduct of his nephew that, apparently as some sort of atonement, he promised John the coveted bishopric on the next vacancy. Shortly afterwards two were at his disposal, but, yielding to the remonstrances of his council, he again passed over the priest of Abu Nefer. John would no longer forego his revenge; but it is curious to observe that, instead of denouncing Michael for an attempt at murder, he drew up a memorial in which he acknowledged the Divine Commission which was claimed by Hakim, and *invented* a long string of crimes which he laid to the charge of the Patriarch!

Hakim immediately gave orders that Zacharias should be thrown into prison, and after three months he was brought out to be thrown to the lions. But the united testimony of both Moslem and Christian writers declares that the lions refused to touch him, and that a second trial was made with like result. Zacharias was therefore left in prison, and meanwhile the persecution broke out all over the country to a degree unequalled since the days of the Patriarch Alexander II.

Hakim proclaimed that all men, on pain of death, should acknowledge his divinity. It is said that he actually opened a register, in which every inhabitant of the four towns—Cairo, Masr, Fostat, and Babylon—was to sign his name in acknowledgment of this blasphemous demand. We are told that sixteen thousand of the population actually did sign, but we are left to infer from the context that the Christians refused to a man, and no doubt many Mohammedans did also. But the fury of the tyrant fell upon the Christians, not only in Egypt, but all

through his empire. The town—Babylon is evidently intended [1]—was set on fire, and that which was not burnt was given over to the pillage of the soldiers.

All swine throughout the country were to be publicly sacrificed. The stringent laws against wine and the cultivation of the grape were revived, in order to render the celebration of the Holy Communion impossible. The principal officers of the Court were the first to fall victims to the Kaliph's rage, and but few instances of recantation are recorded among them. Two were beheaded; a third, to whom are given the names of Gabriel and Abu Negiah —by which latter he was probably known amongst the Moslems—was summoned by Hakim, and offered the post of Supreme Wuzir throughout the whole empire if he would renounce Christianity. Gabriel requested the delay of one day, promising to give an answer on the morrow. Then, going to his house, he called all his friends together, and assured them that he had not asked for this day because he had even for a moment hesitated about his answer, but because he wished to take leave of them all, and exhort them to be steadfast in the coming trial. He entertained them all at a farewell banquet that evening, and on the morrow returned to the Court and informed the Kaliph of his resolution. Neither threats nor persuasions being able to move him, Hakim ordered him to receive one thousand lashes. Gabriel died under the torture after eight hundred strokes; but the remainder, by the tyrant's order, were inflicted on his lifeless body. Eight of the principal Christian secretaries were next seized; four remained firm, four apostatised. Of the four

[1] There are marks of twelve different burnings in the Babylonian heaps, before the final destruction of the city.

latter, one died suddenly; the remaining three were received back into the Church as penitents at the close of the persecution. In Syria the church of the Holy Sepulchre was, with many others in the country, levelled to the ground. The Patriarch Jeremiah, who was an Egyptian and uncle to Hakim, was brought to Cairo, tortured, and beheaded. Arsenius seems to have made good his escape.

The following extracts are from the history of the persecution, written by the Moslem historian Makrizi:—

He then further oppressed the Christians by obliging them to wear a distinct dress and a sash round their loins; he forbade them to hold any procession or games at the Feast of Hosannas, or at that of the Cross, or of the Epiphany, as it was their wont to do at those festivals. He then burnt the wood of a great many crosses, and forbade the Christians to buy men or maid servants. (This restriction one reads with pleasure.) He pulled down the churches that were in the street Rashida, outside the city of Masr. He then laid in ruins the churches of El Maks, outside El Kahira (Cairo), and made over their contents to the people, who plundered them of more goods than can be told. He threw down the convent of El Kosseir,[1] and gave it to the people to sack.

[1] This convent was founded by Arcadius on the Mokattam hills east of Toura in memory of Arsenius, the tutor of his sons, who became a monk in Egypt, and spent the last three years of his life, it is said, in a rock-cut cell or cavern on the Toura hill. Arcadius built a church which became the nucleus of one of the most celebrated monasteries in Egypt. The name of El Kosseir is an abbreviation of the full name Deyr Johannis el Kasir—or the Convent of St. John the Dwarf, the latter being a well-known saint in Egypt. It was rebuilt after Hakim's persecution, and called the Convent of the Mule, because of a curious circumstance which spread the fame of the convent. The monks at one time (so runs the story) trained a mule so that every day it went down alone to the

He then forbade the Christians to celebrate the Feast of Baptism on the banks of the Nile in Egypt, and put an end to their gatherings on these occasions for the sake of recreation.

He then obliged every man among the Christians to wear, hanging from his neck, a wooden cross of the weight of five rotl (about five pounds), and forbade them to ride on horses, but made them ride on mules and asses, with saddles and bridles on which no gold or silver trimmings were allowed, all of black leather. He also proclaimed publicly, at the sound of the bell, in Kahira and Masr, that no livery-stable proprietor should let out a steed to any of the dependent population (the Christian Egyptians), and that no Moslem should let them sail in his boat. He also ordered that the turbans of the Christians should be black, that their stirrups should be of sycamore wood, and that the Jews should wear on their necks outside their dress a round piece of wood weighing five rotl.

He then set about demolishing all churches, and made over to the people, as prey and forfeit, all that was in them, and all that was settled on them. They were then all demolished, all their furniture and chattels were plundered, their endowments were forfeited to others, and mosques were built in their places. He allowed the (Moslem) call to prayer from the church of Shenouda in Masr, and built a wall round the church of Moallakah in Kasr-el-Shamma (the Roman fortress of Babylon). Then many people sent up letters to request to be allowed to search the churches and monasteries in the provinces of Egypt. Their request was hardly received before a favourable answer was returned; so they took the vessels and chattels of the churches and of the monasteries, and sold them in the market-places of Egypt,

river, waited till its water-skins were filled by the man who worked there, and then returned alone to the convent. The ruins apparently still exist, and there are cells cut in the face of the cliff which were probably also inhabited by the monks.

together with what they found in those churches of gold and silver vessels and things of the kind, and bartered their endowments.

But they found enormous wealth in the church of Shenouda, and in that of Moallakah a very great endless quantity of gold fabrics and of silken vestments. The Emir also wrote to the intendants of the provinces to support the Moslems in their destruction of the churches and monasteries. And the work of demolition in Egypt was so general in the year 403 (A.D. 1013) that, according to statements on which one can rely, as to what was demolished at the end of the year 405, both in Egypt and Syria and in the provinces thereof, of temples built by the Greeks, it amounted to more than three thousand churches.[1] All the gold and silver vessels in them were plundered, their endowments were forfeited and those endowments were splendid, and bestowed on wonderful edifices.[2]

[1] So in Malan's translation. But it is evidently a misprint; the number is elsewhere given by Makrizi himself at 30,000.

[2] Among the churches which were first plundered, and then turned into mosques by El Hakim, besides those in Cairo and the suburbs, Abu Salih particularises the following as having been specially beautiful: The church and monastery of the Nestorians, near Al Adawiyah or Miniet-es-Soudan (about 18 miles south of Cairo); the church of Our Lady at Assouan; the church of Our Lady at Ashmounayn. These were turned into mosques. The celebrated monasteries of El Kosseir and Nahya were also burnt to the ground by order of Hakim, but were restored soon after the persecution ceased. A particularly beautiful church of St. Pachomius at Fau (Bafu, in the district of Dashna), whose measurements are given as 150 cubits (225 feet) long and 75 cubits broad, whose walls were covered with glass mosaics, and whose pillars were of fine marble, was wrecked by El Hakim, besides several churches in Nubia, in the course of an expedition into that country. The King of Nubia who reigned in the time of the Kaliph Hakim was named Raphael, and Abu Salih says that he built himself in his royal city of Dongola a lofty palace with domes of red brick, which 'resembles the buildings in Al Irak.' Dongola is described in this reign as 'a large city on the banks of the blessed Nile, and contains many churches and large houses and wide streets.'

He further obliged the Christians to hang on their necks a cross when they went into the bath ; but he made the Jews hang bells on their necks on the same occasion. And, lastly, he ordered all Jews and all Christians to depart out of the land of Egypt and to go to the cities of Roum.[1] But they all gathered together under the castle of El Kahira (Cairo), beseeching and imploring mercy from the Prince of the Faithful, until he let them off being banished. Under these circumstances a great many Christians became Moslems.

The persecution continued with steady, relentless severity for nine years. Almost the whole of this time Zacharias was kept in prison, constantly threatened with being burnt alive, and on the other hand offered gifts and promotion if he would set the example to his people of renouncing Christianity. But neither threats nor persuasions had the smallest effect upon him, and after some years he was allowed to escape, and retired into the Nitrian desert. The last three years of the persecution were the worst of all ; and it is said that, except in the remoter monasteries, Divine service ceased to be held in the churches throughout Egypt. In some of the provinces, however, the governors were bribed to allow the services to be held in private houses. As time went on, indeed, some of the Christians had their private chapels consecrated ; and this fact, being reported to Hakim, seems to have struck him more than anything else with the impossibility of that which he had so lightly undertaken —to stamp out the Christian religion from his empire.

A certain monk named Yemin [2] had in the first shock

[1] This threat of banishment must, I think, have applied to the Jews only. The Christians were mostly *anxious* to escape, but were forbidden to move even from one district to another.

[2] This was probably the name given him by the Moslems.

of persecution become an apostate from the Christian religion, and consented to embrace the peculiar faith of the Kaliph. He had been retained near Hakim, and contrived to acquire great influence over his crazy intellect, so that after a time he openly recanted his recantation, and extorted from the Kaliph a letter of amnesty both for himself and others. He then retired to the monastery of St. Mercurius (Abu Sefayn); but Hakim came even there to visit him, and at length Yemin persuaded the Kaliph to give permission and safe-conduct for the Patriarch to return to Babylon. Zacharias returned, and was sitting in the monastery of St. Mercurius with several other bishops and clergy, among whom was the monk Yemin, when the Kaliph in person descended upon them. Yemin rose to the occasion, and introduced the Patriarch to the Kaliph, who does not appear to have ever seen him before, although he had been his prisoner for years.

His astonishment was great when a little old man in shabby dress rose up to receive him with quiet dignity; and he could not conceal his wonder at the deference shown, not to him, but to this insignificant old man, by all the surrounding prelates and dignitaries. He demanded of them how far the authority of their Patriarch extended, and was told that it was acknowledged all through Egypt, Abyssinia, Nubia, and Pentapolis; and that, without any military force or paid officials, a mere letter of the Patriarch signed with the cross would ensure instant attention to his orders.

'Then,' said Hakim, 'it seems to me that Christianity has a firmer hold on the mind of man than any other religion, since we, though with bloodshed and marshalled

armies and exhaustion of our treasure, cannot effect what one contemptible old man can do by his bare word.'

Eccentric always, he instantly commanded the Patriarch and his bishops to remain where they were till he came back, and rode off to Cairo without giving any hint of his intentions. A crowd had collected outside the walls of the Deyr. Both the people without and the bishops within waited in suspense for what was to come. All must have known how likely it was that the mad Kaliph would return with a force of soldiers to surround the place, and order a general massacre. To their astonishment, the next person to arrive was John, the priest of Abu Nefer, for whose sake Zacharias had at first been imprisoned, and who had recommended himself to the Kaliph by hailing him as the Vicar of God. He saluted the Patriarch as if nothing had happened, congratulated him on his return from exile, and then and there asked to be raised to one of the vacant bishoprics!

His incredible effrontery raised a tumult among the clergy even at that moment of suspense, especially as Zacharias received the man kindly, and it was not known how far his love of peace might lead him. Some say, indeed, that the Patriarch promised to grant his request; but the remonstrances of the bishops, and especially the menacing attitude of Michael of Xois, so alarmed John that he left their presence, and appealed to the crowd outside the Deyr for protection. Some of the bishops, however, interfered between Michael and John, pointing out the extreme impropriety of such a scene at such a time, and John was brought back among them. He was even pacified by being raised to the rank of Hegoumenos—the highest to which he could aspire by canonical rule.

The hours wore on, and at length word passed from one to another that the Kaliph was returning. The bishops drew together and prepared for the worst. There was the clash and clamour of the arrival, and then Hakim himself entered with a paper in his hand which he gave to the Patriarch.

It was an edict for the restoration of the ruined churches, the restitution of the timber, pillars, and stones which had been taken from them, and of the landed property which had belonged to them. Moreover, it abrogated the humiliating restrictions imposed on the dress, &c., of the Christians; and restored them, so far as it could be done, to the status they had occupied at the beginning of his reign.

Thus strangely ended one of the worst of the many persecutions which the ill-fated Egyptians have had to endure. The Kaliph did not long survive his change of policy. A conspiracy (in the palace, it was believed) caused him to be assassinated on one of his nocturnal expeditions to the Mokattam heights. His garments were found, his ass, and the dead bodies of his two companions; but the corpse of the Kaliph was never discovered, and the followers of his sect declared that he had been caught up into heaven, and would reappear on the earth at some future time.

This opinion is still held by the Druses of Mount Lebanon, who represent all that remains of the curious religion of the mad Kaliph Hakim.

During his reign he founded an academy, which was opened in the year 1005 (A.H. 395). It contained an excellent library; and professors of all the sciences were attached to it, besides a regular staff of scribes for copying manuscripts.

This academy was probably always regarded with suspicion by the orthodox Moslems, on account of the heretical tenets of its founder, and about the year 1122 it was suppressed by Alfdal on account of its heretical teaching. A little later it was reopened on orthodox lines and continued until the Fatimite dynasty came to an end in Egypt.

CHAPTER XVI

SHENOUDA AND CHRISTODULOS

A.D. 1020
A.M. 736
A.H. 411

HAKIM was succeeded by his son Ali ebn el Hassan Zahir el Azaz din Allah, commonly known as Zahir, but even this name may be spelt Daher and Taher. The government was really carried on by his aunt, the sister of Hakim, till her death, and though this Kaliph reigned sixteen years there is little to record of him.

Zacharias survived the persecution of Hakim about twelve years. On his death a man named Shenouda, a monk of St. Macarius, was elected to the Patriarchate. On this occasion the Wuzir, who was friendly to the Christians, granted the request of Bekr, one of their nobles, that the customary backsheesh of 6,000*l.* which a new Patriarch paid to the Moslem authorities should be remitted. The Alexandrian clergy, so far from following the example of liberality set by the unbelievers, refused their consent to the election of Shenouda II. until he signed the bond for the yearly payment of that tribute which Theophanius had in vain entreated them to forego or lessen. In the present state of the Church this bond alone made it almost impossible to dispense with the ordination fees, which were regarded as the greatest scandal of the Egyptian Church; but from all accounts Shenouda went far beyond any of his predecessors, and did actually sell the bishoprics as they

became vacant to the highest bidder. In this generation, when the Christians were protected instead of being persecuted, the office of a bishop was one of great dignity and power, and sees were freely competed for by the ambitious and unscrupulous men who would conform to the Patriarch's terms. John of Abu Nefer, whose power to coerce successive Patriarchs is not easily explained, since he seems to have had neither virtues to recommend him to Zacharias nor money to bribe Shenouda, was made Bishop of Farma, or Rhinocura, with a pension of 60*l*. The see of Panephysus was sold to one Raphael for 1,200*l*. as consecration fee; the see of Lycopolis, or Assiout, was sold to the Protopope of that Church for a sum not stated. In the latter case the citizens indignantly refused to receive the man as their bishop, and he positively returned to Shenouda and demanded his money back if the Patriarch could not compel the diocese to receive him. The Patriarch refused to do either, but he was eventually received in the diocese, though not in the town of Assiout.

Not only did Shenouda sell the bishoprics as openly as the presentations to livings were recently sold in England; but he invented a theory that on the death of the bishop his personal property reverted to the Church. The Bishop of Shenana having died, Shenouda summoned his brother to give up the personal effects which had belonged to the bishop. The brother begged that the empty house at least might be left to him, and on Shenouda's refusal he turned Moslem, and thus retained the whole of his brother's property.

It seems clear that in the case of Shenouda the ordination and consecration fees were really made the excuse for bribery and extortion to a terrible extent; and that in the

second year of his Patriarchate he point-blank refused to pay the yearly tribute to the Alexandrians which was the alleged excuse for his proceedings. The Chapter brought an action against him and obtained payment of the sum with costs. All this was in a time of freedom from persecution, and such liberal treatment on the part of the Moslem authorities as the Church had never known since the days of Amr. It was no wonder that the great lay families of the Egyptian Church became bitterly ashamed of the spectacle presented by such 'Christians.' The same Bekr whose influence had procured from the Kaliph the remission of the backsheesh on the Patriarch's consecration now bestirred himself to reform these crying evils. He sought an interview with the Patriarch and earnestly remonstrated with him, pointing out the scandal which was thus brought upon the Christian name. Shenouda for his part threw the blame on the Alexandrian clergy, and declared that without the ordination and consecration fees it would be impossible for him to raise sufficient money to satisfy their demands. Bekr met this difficulty by solemnly undertaking that he and some other lay friends of his would find the money for the yearly payment to Alexandria, if on his part Shenouda and his bishops would bind themselves to abstain from exacting fees or other simoniacal ways of obtaining money. To this Shenouda consented; a bond was drawn up to that effect and signed by the Patriarch, who then called a synodical meeting to obtain the signatures of his bishops. But the bishops, who had almost all paid for their consecration and were in the habit of exacting ordination fees from those whom they admitted to holy orders, received the proposal with indignation. They justified the theory of such fees much

as we suppose the Western bishops would do in like circumstances, and loudly protested against the interference of the laity. News of the stormy proceedings in the synod being carried to Bekr, he hastened to present himself before the bishops and entreated to be heard. Once more he repeated the arguments which he had used to Shenouda; reminded the bishops that the Patriarch Ephraim, whom the whole Church revered as a saint, had abolished the fees in question, and begged them to consider what account they would have to give of their action at the bar of Heaven if they refused the offer now made to them.

At the close of his speech Shenouda expressed his hearty concurrence in what had just been said. At the same time he asked Bekr to return him the deed which he had signed for a few moments, as he wished the bishops to see it for themselves. Bekr, thinking no evil, readily brought forward the document, and placed it in the hands of Shenouda. Before the whole assembly the Patriarch tore the deed in pieces.

The meeting broke up in the greatest disorder. Some of the bishops had been won by the arguments of Bekr, all complained of the vacillation and want of honour shown by the Patriarch. Most of the bishops and clergy present adjourned to hold a sort of indignation meeting in the church of St. Mercurius (Abu Sefayn), while Shenouda and a few of his partisans remained in the church of St. Michael. The principal laymen joined the bishops, and after long and informal discussions the bishops appear to have acknowledged the justice of the remarks addressed to them, and signified their readiness to accept the terms offered. Shenouda alone, who must have counted on the opposition of his bishops to save him from

the onus of rejecting Bekr's proposals, now remained obstinate. He went, apparently on the next morning, to the church where the bishops and laity had reassembled; and the whole day was consumed in fruitless discussion. Bekr stood his ground, pleading and arguing with the Patriarch until the latter lost all control. Furious that Bekr should have won the whole bench to his opinion, and determined not to yield, he closed the disgraceful scene by a yet more disgraceful act. He ordered Bekr to be seized and publicly beaten. The meeting again broke up in the greatest disorder and the ill government of the Patriarch continued unchecked.

Zahir died in 1036 (A.H. 427), and his son Moez or Muad Abu Temim el Mustanzir b' Allah, commonly known as Moustanser or Mustanzir, was proclaimed his successor; but as he was only seven years old the government was for some time carried on by his mother (a black slave) and successive Wuzirs; of whom the first was the Jewish slavedealer who had sold her to Zahir. The palace was filled with negroes, who were favoured to a degree which at length roused the resentment of the Turks and Arabs. A special body of negro troops was raised by the princess and retained in Cairo as life guards.

The early years of Mustanzir were troubled by successive rebellions against the authority of a negress regent and a boy Kaliph. In Syria, in North Africa, in Asia Minor, fighting continued with little interruption for some years. In Egypt an impostor gave himself out to be Hakim returned to life, and raised a popular insurrection, which was, however, of short duration. Eventually, however, the authority of Mustanzir was established on a wider basis than ever. He also received a great accession of

wealth from the death of two great-aunts, daughters of the first Fatimite Kaliph, who were enormously wealthy. It is said that their demise had been anxiously looked forward to by each successive Kaliph ; but the old ladies saw four generations of their family succeed before they left the coveted wealth to the young Mustanzir. Part of the riches so acquired the Kaliph employed in restoring and beautifying the Mosque of Amr at Fostat. It had been built on the old simple plan when the Saracens forbore to copy the domes and minarets of the Christian churches, and merely stole the pillars they required for the small portion that was roofed. Now Mustanzir made a niche towards Mecca of beautiful workmanship, placed a pulpit in the mosque, and at a later period caused a minaret to be built for it.

In 1037 (A.H. 429) a treaty was concluded between the Fatimite Kaliph and the Emperor of Byzantium, by which the latter agreed to release all the Moslem prisoners whom he had taken in the late wars (to the number of 5,000), on condition that he was allowed to rebuild the Church of the Sepulchre at Jerusalem, which had been destroyed twenty-six years before by order of the Kaliph Hakim. It was accordingly rebuilt with great care and splendour.

In 1047 (A.H. 439) Shenouda, who had been very ill for three years, died, and was succeeded by Christodulos, called Abd-el-Messiah by the Arabs. He found the Church in a very bad state, owing to the conduct of the late Patriarch. The laity seem to have done their best, for five new churches in Alexandria alone were waiting to be consecrated, and one, St. Mark, to be re-opened after restoration. But the trouble about the ordination fees

had evidently deterred many from seeking Holy Orders; and Christodulos set himself earnestly to work to restore and reform the affairs of the Church. In one day he consecrated the five new churches: St. Mennas, St. John the Evangelist, St. Mercurius, St. George, and St. Raphael, and re-opened the Church of St. Mark. On the same day he consecrated one priest and sixty deacons, and published a series of canons which he had drawn up for the regulation of the Egyptian Church. These were thirty-one in number, and are the first additions to the canons made by the Egyptian Church since her separation from the Greek and Roman Churches. Of these Neale gives the following as the most important:

Marriage is strictly forbidden in Lent; baptism or burial on Good Friday. Orders were not to be conferred within the octave of Pentecost; no foreign bishop, priest, or deacon is allowed to exercise any function in Alexandria. The Fasts of the Apostles and of the Nativity are enjoined; Wednesdays and Fridays are also to be observed as days of fasting. It was forbidden to baptize a child (except in case of danger) without afterwards administering the Holy Communion. Marriage with a Melkite wife was invalid unless both parties were crowned by a priest of the National Church. Any deacon or layman, who from a dispute with his priest is unwilling to receive the Communion from him, is forbidden to receive it at the hand of any other. Any one who appeals from the jurisdiction of the National Church to that of a Mohammedan cadi or the Kaliph, should be, if an ecclesiastic, suspended, if a layman, excommunicated. The corban or oblation is to be prepared at home by the faithful after the accustomed manner.

This last clause had reference to a controversy which had lately arisen about the manner of preparing the obla-

tion or bread of good will. The cakes distributed under this name at the celebration of the Lord's Supper in the Egyptian Churches are well known; but the Syrians were accustomed to mix a little salt and oil in making the bread, and Christodulos regarded this as an innovation not to be encouraged. It so happened that he was himself celebrating the Sacrament in St. Mercurius (Abu Sefayn), at this time one of the most important churches in Egypt, when a Syrian Christian of high rank, the principal physician to the Kaliph himself, attended and brought an oblation of bread prepared after the manner of his country. The Patriarch pointed out that this was contrary to rule, and refused to receive it. The physician persisted, and the Patriarch ordered his attendants to put the man out of the church. The Syrian resisted, and force was used to such an extent that he was injured in the unseemly struggle. By this means Christodulos made himself an enemy at Court.

Other causes conspired to render the zealous and uncompromising Patriarch obnoxious to the Moslems. Under the reign of the unworthy Shenouda the standard of the Christians had deteriorated very much, and though some of the laity had made a gallant effort to uphold the Church, others had apostatised and joined the dominant faith. Among these was a young man, the son of a Court official, whose father however banished him from his house in consequence. Some time afterwards the young man, whose name was Nekam, began to realise what he had done, and in deep penitence sought refuge in the convent of St. Michael at Moctara. Some of the monks from that convent were going to St. Macarius in Nitria, and recommended Nekam to come with them, which he at first consented to

do. On the eve of departure, however, Nekam declared that it would be an act of cowardice, and that the only right course was for him to profess Christ openly in the place where he had formerly denied Him. He therefore concealed himself no longer, but in the Christian dress returned to Cairo and mingled with his former associates. He was at once arrested as an apostate from the faith of Islam and thrown into prison. His father used all his interest to save him, backed by the promise of an enormous bribe. The Governor of the city declared that he had no choice and that the law must take its course; but privately suggested to the father that if Nekam chose to feign madness he would be able to procure his deliverance.

The father hastened to the prison, and with loving entreaties prevailed on Nekam to adopt this stratagem. He then left the prison to call the physicians and witnesses before whom the farce was to be played. But during his absence a Syrian monk who was also a prisoner exhorted Nekam to martyrdom with such effect that when his father returned he met him calmly and professed himself before the witnesses a Christian. He was therefore tried and beheaded, but his body, by the special permission of the Kaliph, was given up to his friends, who buried it near the church of St. Michael. When the Patriarch, however, next came to Babylon he directed the body to be taken up and buried inside the church with the honours of a martyr.

Christodulos travelled all over the country, earnestly endeavouring to restore and reanimate the fallen Church. He does not appear, however, to have abolished altogether the ordination fees, so that one party in the Church considered him lax, and reproached him with simony. Under him new churches were built everywhere, especially in

Dimrua,[1] where he had fixed his Patriarchal residence and built himself a house. This place rose rapidly in importance, and seems to have been entirely inhabited by Christians, but being at some distance from any seat of Moslem government it escaped notice for some years.

The first accusation brought against the Patriarch was that, owing to his influence, George, King of Nubia, not only refused all alliance with the Moslems, but refused to send the slave tribute. The peace and prosperity of these Christian kingdoms seems to have steadily increased since Moez sent his ambassadors to spy out the land ; and Christodulos had sent one of his Egyptian bishops to assist in the dedication of a new church built by George. He was, however, able to demonstrate to the Wuzir's satisfaction that he had nothing to do with the stoppage of the slave tribute and was set at liberty, but the feeling against the Christians increased more and more as they prospered under the government of their new Patriarch.

In the year 1052 the Nile hardly rose at all, and food became scarce. The next two years were no better, and the Kaliph Mustanzir wrote to the Greek Emperor Constantine X. for corn. A fleet was already laden with supplies for Egypt when the Emperor died, and the Empress declared that the corn should not sail unless the Kaliph consented to a formal treaty, offensive and defensive, between the Greek and Saracenic Empires. Mustanzir refused, and the corn was not allowed to depart. The famine became very grievous, and pestilence as usual followed in its wake.[2]

[1] Dimrua has been identified by Neale with Hermopolis Parva, or Damanhur, but without any grounds assigned. Amelineau does not mention it, and Quatremère says the name was Timru, and that it is a town in the Garbieh province.

[2] It was during this reign (1054), though it appears to have passed

So far the Church had escaped actual persecution under Mustanzir, but about this time a Moslem judge 'by chance' passed through the Patriarchal city of Dimrua, and wrote an account of it to the Wuzir with the greatest indignation. He describes it as a second Constantinople —there were seventeen churches in the city alone, most of which had been recently built, besides others in the surrounding districts! Moreover, he complained that the Patriarch's house, which was large enough for a palace, was engraved with inscriptions insulting the Moslem Faith! Yazouri wrote to ask for a list of the insulting inscriptions on the Patriarch's house, since here, it appears, was a tangible offence which could be used against him. The judge, who does not appear to have read them (probably they were in Coptic), made a second visit with his scribes to Dimrua for this purpose. The inscriptions resolved themselves on inspection into one which was engraved over the door of the house: 'In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which three are but one God.'

The inscription was at once ordered to be erased. The Patriarch offered no resistance, but merely observed, 'You may erase these words from above my door, but you cannot erase them from my heart.'

All the newly built churches in Dimrua were now pulled down by order of the Moslem authorities, and another edict ordered that all the churches in Egypt should be closed. In the Delta this order was carried out with great bitterness by a man whose personal hatred of the Christians was surety for his zeal. He also contrived to

unnoticed alike by the Greek and National Churches in Egypt, that the final separation took place between the Greek and Roman Churches.

exact from them the sum of 70,000 dinars, but while he was still prosecuting the work he was thrown from his horse and killed, to the great relief of the Christians in the Delta.

In Alexandria they fared better, since the Governor to whom the order was entrusted was favourable to them. On receiving directions to close and rob the churches he sent for the principal officials of the Church, one of whom was Mahoub the historian, and warned them at once to hide whatever they might have of value in such manner that the soldiers whom he must send round the churches next day should be unable to find them. All that night the Copts were busy, and when the Government officials arrived on the morrow to confiscate everything of value in the churches they found nothing but a few mats and curtains. The Governor thereupon wrote to the Wuzir pointing out that the Christians of Alexandria were so miserably poor that they had nothing of value even in their churches, and that it was impossible for them to pay the fine demanded, viz. 6,000 dinars. The sum was therefore reduced to 1,000 dinars, which the Christians readily agreed to pay. Half was contributed by the Greek and half by the Egyptian Church ; for Alexandria was the stronghold of the former, and the numbers of each Church in her were nearly equal.

The keys of one church were restored to the Egyptian Patriarch, and service allowed to be celebrated in it. It is stated also that the house of Anianus, St. Mark's first convert, was spared to them, and there is a curious story in Quatremère, taken from an Arab MS., to the effect that the head of *St. John the Baptist*, which up to this date had been preserved in a private house in Alexandria, was now

hidden by the Christians, lest it should fall into the hands of the Moslems!

The Patriarch himself was arrested and his house searched. They found in the treasury 6,000 dinars, which the Moslem authorities immediately confiscated for their own use. Christodulos was only set at liberty owing to the powerful intercession of the Christians most indispensable to the Government. A Moslem was always chosen as Wuzir, but so little dependence could Mustanzir place on his own co-religionists that in twelve years of his reign there were no less than thirty-five changes in this post. It has always been one of the worst offences of the Christians in the eyes of the Egyptian Moslems, that the superior intelligence and probity of the former render their employment indispensable to the Government. In times of persecution popular clamour has demanded and obtained their instant dismissal over and over again, only to be grudgingly readmitted when it was found impossible to carry on any settled form of government without them.

About this time Egypt was visited by a severe shock of earthquake, which destroyed at least 25,000 people.

CHAPTER XVII

BEDR EL JAMAL, THE ARMENIAN

1065 1781 1458 THE squabbles between the different Moslem nationalities of the kingdom soon broke out into civil wars. The Kaliph's mother, as we have said, was a negress, and, not content with filling her palace with negroes, had raised a special negro regiment for her own service. On the occasion of the festival at Birket Omaïrah (now called Birket el Haj), which precedes the departure of the pilgrimage to Mecca, a quarrel broke out between the Turkish soldiers of the Kaliph and the black soldiers of his mother. A Turk who was drunk having drawn his sword upon a negro, the comrades of the latter killed the Turk on the spot. The Turks immediately surrounded the tent of the Kaliph, but receiving no satisfaction from him they attacked the blacks forthwith, and a bloody skirmish took place in the pilgrim camp. The spark once lighted, the quarrel became a war between the Turkish and Arab troops on the one hand, and the negroes on the other, neither party paying the smallest heed to the Kaliph or to his mother. The negroes marched out of Cairo, and, taking up their position in the province of Said, were joined by all the negroes in Egypt, to the number, it is said, of 50,000. Then they marched upon Cairo, but were met by the Turks, and the two parties fought a

pitched battle. At first the Turks were defeated, but by a clever stratagem they turned the fortune of war, and slew thousands of the blacks. The mother of the Kaliph openly espoused the cause of the negroes, and sent them succours; the Kaliph, when appealed to by the Turks, would only reply that he had nothing to do with the negroes. He sent an ambassador to try and make peace between the two camps, but without effect. Distracted between the civil war on the one hand and the perpetual dishonesty of his Moslem officials on the other, the feeble Kaliph, after a stormy scene with his mother, set off alone to Fostat, intending to abdicate the throne, and become a devotee in the Mosque of Amr for the rest of his life. He was overtaken, however, and brought back to the palace. The contest went on for some years with varying fortunes for the Turks and the negroes, and with unvarying ill-fortunes alike for Christian and Mohammedan Copts, who were harassed and plundered all over the country; the Christians suffering most of all. At length Nasr el Doulah, the leader of the Turks, succeeded in finally crushing the negro troops, and became virtually master of the kingdom. The unfortunate Kaliph was reduced to a mere cypher in his palace, his treasury was exhausted, and the ravished country had little left which he could extract from it. The Turks clamoured for more and more money, and at last the Kaliph made over to them the accumulated treasures of the last hundred years in his palace to satisfy their rapacity. We have long lists of the jewels, the precious objects and the embroideries, which were dragged out and divided between the Turks. Many of them are described at full length, and among them a piece of work which had been executed by order of the Kaliph Moez, representing all the

different countries of the earth—the mountains, the seas, the rivers, the towns and roads, each being marked with its name in gold and silver. All the works of art which had been collected with such care by his predecessors, a yearly sum of fifty thousand dinars having been spent in forming the collection, besides the presents received by each Kaliph from various emperors and kings, were in one fortnight of the year 1069 (A.H. 461) dragged out and divided among the ignorant Turkish soldiers: among them was a very large collection of old armour. One of the servants employed in the work of removal carelessly set fire to a piece of cotton; the fire caught, and before it could be subdued the whole of the costly furniture, which had not yet been taken from the palace, was consumed. There remained only the library, and even that was not spared. The Fatimite Kaliphs had collected books ever since they came into Egypt, and these were distributed by camel-loads not only to the leaders of the Turks, who possibly could read, but to the private soldiers, by whom they were wantonly destroyed. The Governor of Alexandria, who was one of the generals sharing in this wholesale plunder of the palace, sent off all he had been able to lay hands on, and particularly an enormous number of the books, which he seems to have valued, to Alexandria. But on their way through the disordered country a wandering tribe of Berbers, who under the name of the Lewatah took a prominent part in the troubles of this time, fell upon the convoy, and took the whole. They tore off the bindings of the books to make slippers, burnt some of the leaves, and threw the rest away in the desert. The wind blew them into heaps, so that 'to this day,' says the Moslem author, 'the place is called the Hill of Books.'

Nasr el Doulah was now virtually master of Egypt; the Kaliph was little more than a prisoner in his almost empty palace. Nasr's bad government, however, at length turned even his own partisans against him; some of his troops showed signs of mutiny, and Mustanzir seized the moment to put himself at the head of a popular movement against his rebellious subject. Nasr el Doulah was taken by surprise, and retired to Gizeh. As, however, a large body of his Turkish troops rejoined him, he crossed the river and gave battle to the troops of Mustanzir in the waste ground between the two cities of Fostat and Babylon on the south, and the two Masrs on the north. This space had once been covered with villas and gardens, but had fallen into utter ruin during the troubles preceding the invasion of the Fatimites.

Victory declared for Mustanzir, but Nasr el Doulah escaped, and took possession of Alexandria. Here he declared open war upon the Kaliph, allying himself with the Lewatah, who had harassed the Delta for some time, and were now allowed to ravage the country with impunity. They camped where they chose, and stayed there until they had exhausted the produce of the district. They allowed no banks to be repaired or canals to be cleaned; all the lawful holders of the lands were plundered, but the Christians were treated without mercy. They plundered and destroyed the monasteries of the Wady Natron, and massacred most of the monks, though some escaped and fled to the Delta. In one of their raids the Patriarch Christodulos fell into their hands; he was robbed of all he had with him, and cruelly tortured. But Abu-l-Taib, the confidential secretary of Nasr el Doulah, was, as usual, a Christian, and, owing to his urgent representations, Nasr el

Doulah intimated to his barbarous allies that the Patriarch must be given up. The secretary paid a ransom of 3,000 dinars, and Christodulos was set at liberty. A little later Abu-l-Taib tried to save the life of his former employer, the Moslem Governor of Tandeta, which the Lewatah had seized and were pillaging; but he arrived too late, and on his reproaching the barbarians with the murder they fell upon him and killed him.

For the last five years, since 1064 (A.H. 457), the canals had been allowed to fall into complete disrepair; the Nile had been unable to water the country; and the civil war had effectually prevented any steps being taken to avert the inevitable result. No road in the country was safe from brigands or plundering parties of irregular troops. The village Copts—who, whether Moslem or Christian, only asked to be left in peace to their husbandry—no longer cared to sow what they were never allowed to reap, but lived from hand to mouth, while famine spread all over Egypt, and had grown worse with each successive year, till in the year 1069 it assumed terrible proportions.

In Cairo, Fostat, and Babylon, a loaf of bread was sold for fifteen dinars, one egg for a dinar, a cat for three dinars, a dog for five. Even the supply of dogs and cats ran short, and one man was convicted of driving a regular trade in human flesh. He decoyed women and children (no doubt with offers of food), strangled them, and exposed the flesh for sale. All the immense establishment of horses, mules, and camels belonging to the Kaliph had been eaten, except three horses; the ornaments of the tombs of his ancestors and the wardrobes of his women had been sold for bread. At length the Kaliph was reduced to the charity of a woman who had been enormously wealthy, and who

spent all she had in feeding the famine-stricken people. She sent the Kaliph a bowl of soup every day; but the women of the palace were at length told to seek food where they could. They gathered together and agreed to make their way out of the country on foot. The next day they set out in procession, shrilling the piercing wails of Eastern lament. But hardly had they left the walls of the city than, one after another, they staggered and fell, and died of starvation where they lay.

One day the Wuzir on his way to the palace was set upon by a starving crowd and knocked off his mule, which was seized and devoured before his eyes. His followers, however, succeeded in arresting three of the ringleaders, and the unhappy wretches were at once crucified. By the next morning three fleshless skeletons were seen upon the crosses; the dead men had been eaten during the night.

Pestilence followed, and the population died like flies all over the land. The cities suffered most; Cairo, Fostat, and Babylon were more than decimated. Tanis, up to this time one of the principal cities in the Delta and still inhabited mostly by Christians, was completely destroyed by the famine and the plague. Out of the many thousand inhabitants, only one hundred remained alive, and the city was deserted. Its bishop, Michael the historian, appears to have done his best, and perished with his flock. In their extremity the Christians sent for help to the Christian kingdoms of the Soudan, still prosperous and at peace. George, the King of Nubia, had sent to request the consecration of a bishop (probably the Metropolitan) named Pamoun, and by him Christodulos sent an earnest appeal for help for his starving people. The famine was rendered absolute by

the action of Nasr el Doulah, who prevented any supplies coming to the sea-ports from reaching Cairo. The story is told of a woman who came into Fostat one day bearing a necklace which was valued at a thousand dinars, and endeavoured, for a long time without success, to exchange it for some flour. At length a man took pity on her and gave her a supply of flour. Her home, however, was in Cairo, and she dared not cross the desert alone with her precious burden, so she hired some men to escort her, promising to pay them in flour. Arrived at the Bab Zawilah, she supposed herself in safety, and dismissed her escort. But she was hardly within the Cairo streets when the starving crowd surrounded her and tore the flour from her arms. A handful or two was all she could save, enough to make one loaf. When she had made this, she took it in her hands and went to the space in front of the palace gate. Mounting to a spot where all could see her, she raised the bread in both hands and cried aloud: 'Behold, ye dwellers in Cairo, and pray for our Kaliph, whose reign is so benevolent, and renders us so prosperous. Thanks to him, this cake of bread that you see has cost me a thousand dinars.'

The woman's words were repeated to the Kaliph, and stung him into characteristic action. He sent for the commandant of police, loaded him with reproaches, and swore by God that if he did not find some way of furnishing the markets with bread, at a moderate price, he should be beheaded and everything belonging to him confiscated.

The commandant had some reason to suspect that a knot of corn merchants were really hiding supplies of grain, and took an equally characteristic way of finding

out. He took out of the prisons several criminals under sentence of death and dressed them in the ordinary garb of a rich corn-merchant. He then called a meeting of the corn-merchants, taking care that all those whom he suspected should be present. Before them all he summoned a corn-merchant whom he had convicted of hiding corn—*i.e.* one of the aforesaid criminals. Assuring the assembly that the vengeance of Heaven and the Kaliph was about to fall on all those guilty of so grievous an offence, he caused the man to be beheaded on the spot. Another 'corn-merchant' was treated in the same way, and a third was called, when the assembled merchants rose and entreated the commandant to pause, assuring him that the examples he had made were quite sufficient for them, and that they would at once open their granaries, and sell such flour as remained to them at a moderate price. They were not allowed to depart till the price had been fixed by the commandant, and thus for a short time the immediate wants of the city were relieved. But all such expedients were necessarily temporary, and Nasr el Doulah, breaking up his camp at Salahieh, marched upon a city almost denuded of population, and helpless to resist. When the successful tyrant entered the palace he found the wretched Kaliph clothed in rags, and seated upon a common mat. He was kept as a sort of state prisoner by Nasr el Doulah, who tortured his mother and heaped indignities upon him, till in 1072–73 Nasr el Doulah was assassinated by one of his own associates. Neither the country nor the Kaliph was any the better, however, for the change of tyrants, and their miserable state continued another year, till the Kaliph wrote for help in secret to the able general who had made himself master of Syria.

This was Bedr el Jamal, an Armenian, who, like so many of the ablest Egyptian rulers, began life as a slave, but, unlike the majority, he still clung in secret to the religion of his youth.[1] Rising rapidly in the army, he had been appointed Governor of Syria by Mustanzir, and had never openly renounced his allegiance to his nominal master, though for years he had now been entirely independent. Mustanzir wrote and offered him supreme power in Egypt if he would come and free the unhappy country from its present tyrants. Bedr accepted, but the most profound secrecy was maintained, and, in spite of remonstrances of his generals, Bedr insisted on invading Egypt by sea, that he might arrive the more unexpectedly. He landed near Damietta, marched through the Delta without opposition, and entered Cairo in the close of the year 1074 (A.H. 467). The petty tyrants, unaware that Mustanzir had sent for his nominal subject, supposed him another rebel, and hastened to make friends with him, since they were clearly unable to oppose him. Bedr received them all with effusion, and invited them to a great feast. To each Emir he told off a picked soldier, with secret instructions to assassinate the Emir on his leaving the palace. Whoever failed not to strike instant death was to be rewarded with the house and goods of his victim.

This truly Oriental plan succeeded perfectly. In one night the whole band of tyrants was slain, and Bedr presented himself before the Kaliph, who clothed him with honour and proclaimed him commander-in-chief. Bedr at once took energetic measures to restore order and, so far

[1] It is difficult to say if Bedr el Jamal were avowedly a Christian or not. The Christian Emir referred to by Abu Salih as being lord of all Egypt about this time *might* be Taj ed Doula.

as possible, food to the distracted country. The Lewatah still occupied the Delta; Damietta and Alexandria were each held by one of the petty Moslem tyrants who had ruined Egypt steadily for more than twenty years. In one pitched battle he broke the power of the Lewatah, captured both their chief and his son, and afterwards swept them out of the country with ease. Damietta and Alexandria were taken by storm and with fearful carnage. Bedr used invariably his own well-drilled troops, on which he could rely, and the undisciplined hordes of Turks and barbarians which had lived on the plunder of a defenceless land for so long had no chance against him. The Said was next cleared of the same armed brigands, and so many women and horses were taken prisoners in the process that after distributing the best of each to his victorious soldiers, Bedr sent the rest to be sold in Cairo. It is recorded that the price of a woman was a dinar, the price of a horse a dinar and a half. The peasantry were assured of protection, and encouraged to sow their lands once more. It was proclaimed that all taxes on land and agricultural produce should be remitted for the space of three years. Once more Mecca acknowledged the Egyptian Mustanzir as the true Kaliph, and the inhabitants tore the black coverings of the Kaliph of Baghdad from their mosque, to replace them by the white embroideries of the Fatimites.

Though Bedr was a friend to the Christians, he dispensed strict justice, and never openly favoured them. Some Moslem trader having reported to Bedr that Victor, the Metropolitan of Nubia, had destroyed a mosque built by the Moslems in that kingdom, Christodulos was promptly arrested, and held responsible for the action of his Metropolitan. As, however, the Patriarch was able to prove

that the story was entirely false, he was set free without injury. One of the robber chiefs with whom Bedr was fighting in the Said escaped into Nubia, where he thought himself safe from pursuit. But Bedr sent two sherifs to demand the extradition of the rebel from the King of Nubia, and asked Christodulos to send a bishop with the sherifs to sanction and enforce the request. Christodulos sent a bishop named Mercurius, and the brigand chief was at once surrendered to justice. He was brought down to Fostat, and crucified outside the iron gate.

Egypt was rapidly recovering under the stern but just government of Bedr, when she was threatened by a new danger. The greater part of Bedr's troops were still in the Said, when in 1076–7 (A.H. 469) Atziz, a Turkoman adventurer, who in Bedr's absence had overrun Syria and taken Damascus, Jerusalem, and Tiberias, suddenly appeared with 40,000 men in Egypt, and had camped close to Cairo before Bedr could recall his troops. In this dilemma Bedr opened negotiations with the invader, as if the only question were the amount of ransom to be paid to Atziz if he would consent to withdraw from Egypt. He prolonged these negotiations as long as possible, and meanwhile his troops were hastening down from the Said. Almost at the same time an enormous caravan of pilgrims on their way to Mecca arrived at Cairo, among whom were 3,000 men capable of bearing arms. Bedr rode out to these men and made them a stirring address, assuring them that they could perform no more meritorious deed than to join in repulsing these invaders on their way to Mecca. They agreed with enthusiasm, arms and money were supplied them, and directions given for the plan of battle. Bedr had also managed to detach several bodies

of mercenary Arabs from the troops of Atziz; and when his own troops arrived, he fell suddenly and swiftly on the invaders.

The surprise and the success were complete. Great numbers of the invading army were slain, and the rest took flight, abandoning their camp and all the spoil they had gathered in Syria, which thus fell into the hands of the Egyptians. It is said that Bedr found in the Syrian camp no less than 10,000 children of both sexes, who had been carried off during the march through Egypt to be sold as slaves.

After this no outsider attempted to interfere with the Armenian warrior, and for eighteen years Egypt prospered under his government. He rebuilt the walls of Cairo, and enlarged or built the three gates now called Bab Zawilah, Bab en Nasr, and Bab el Futûh. He also everywhere restored old mosques, and built new ones in Alexandria, in Cairo, and in the Island of Rhoda. One or two popular tumults broke out, but were sternly repressed, though one of them was headed by Bedr's own son.

Once more during this time the unfortunate Patriarch Christodulos was arrested and held responsible for a charge brought against another of his Metropolitans, the Archbishop of Abyssinia, who is called indifferently Abdun and Cyril—the latter being probably a name taken at his consecration. He was accused to Bedr of being on suspiciously friendly terms with the Moslems of that country, and tempting them to drink wine when they dined with him. Christodulos replied that, as it happened, he had not yet consecrated any Metropolitan for Abyssinia, but, as Cyril had been elected to that post, he was about to send Mercurius, Bishop of Wissim, to assist in the ceremony of

consecration. Bedr yielded to the representations of the Patriarch, and permitted Mercurius to depart for that purpose. At this time the Moslem authorities in Egypt were so suspicious of the Patriarch's influence in the Christian kingdoms of the Soudan and Abyssinia that all letters sent between the Patriarchate and these countries were regularly opened, read, and forwarded or not, as the Moslem Government might choose A year or two afterwards Christodulos died, and was buried in the church of Moallakah in Babylon, though his body was afterwards removed to Nitria. Since the destruction of the Patriarchal church of Dimrua, Christodulos had fixed his residence at Babylon, where, besides the old cathedral of Moallakah, he had raised St. Mercurius (Deyr Abu Sefayn) to the dignity of a Patriarchal church and residence. In Cairo also, in the Greek quarter, a church dedicated to the Virgin was made a Patriarchal church. The effect of this was to bring the churches in question, and the rights of jurisdiction, &c., belonging to them, directly under the Patriarch, instead of under the Bishop of Babylon. The latter prelate seems to have consented to this change in the time of Christodulos, though a subsequent bishop of that see contested the legitimacy of the proceeding.

Christodulos, it is clear, had won the respect of Bedr el Jamal; and his successor, a monk of Macarius, was received at Court with marked honour. He was even requested to bless the palace of the Kaliph, a ceremony which he performed in great state, and the Christians hoped for happier days. The new Patriarch had been called George by his parents, but on his elevation to the Patriarchal throne he took the name of Cyril II. Not long after his accession Solomon, the King of Nubia, abdicated his throne in favour

of his nephew George,[1] and retired to a convent to spend the remainder of his life in prayer. But as he chose for this purpose Deyr Onuphrius, a desert church within the territory claimed by the governors of Assuan, the suspicions of the Moslems were again awakened. A band of soldiers was sent to surprise the convent, arrest the late king, and send him to Cairo. Whether during his march northwards representations were made to the Kaliph, or whether Bedr thought it an occasion on which his own predilections might safely be avowed, we know not; but as the regal monk neared Babylon, not only the Christians but the principal Moslem officials went out to welcome him with drums and trumpets, and he was escorted in a triumphal entry to the Wuzir. By Bedr he was received with much honour, and assigned a splendid house instead of the monastery which he desired. Nor was he allowed to leave the capital again until his death, which took place about a year afterwards.

A young Egyptian monk named Severus, of considerable learning, great ambition, and few scruples, at this time conceived the idea of becoming Metropolitan of Abyssinia. The see was not vacant, but, in spite of the mission of Mercurius, there seems to have been some informality in the consecration of Abdun or Cyril, which gave Severus what he conceived to be a fair excuse for trying to supplant him. He managed to ingratiate himself with Bedr, and not only promised a large bribe in return for the Wuzir's influence, but assured the Kaliph that, if elected to the see of Abyssinia, he would not only build four mosques in that country for the benefit of the Mohammedan settlers, but

[1] The throne of Nubia passed, not to the son of the reigning monarch, but to the son of his eldest sister.

would do all he could to forward Moslem interests in Abyssinia. Bedr yielded to his representations, and issued a mandate to the Patriarch Cyril for his consecration as Metropolitan of Abyssinia, a command which Cyril weakly obeyed. Severus started at once for Axum, and, denouncing the irregular consecration of Abdun, declared that he had been sent to supersede him. Abdun was not sufficiently popular in the kingdom to contest the point, and fled to Dah'laka, where he was arrested, sent to Cairo, and beheaded; though on what pretext does not appear. Severus, though the means by which he obtained his elevation cannot be justified, seems to have done his best to reform the abuses of the Church in Abyssinia, which had become very great. In particular he tried his best to put an end to the practice of polygamy; for the Abyssinians have a strong Jewish element in their Christianity, and their standard of morality has always been fixed by the Old Testament rather than by the New. Moreover, they can fairly claim that polygamy is not forbidden even in the New Testament, except to bishops and deacons; though it is distinctly contrary to the spirit of Christ's teaching. In 1086 a dispute broke out between Cyril and his bishops, the origin of which is not very clear. Certain ecclesiastics—amongst whom are mentioned two bishops, whose sees however are not found in any authentic list of Egyptian bishoprics—had in some way given great offence to the rest of the bishops and also to the principal inhabitants of Babylon. The Patriarch was applied to, and entreated to pass sentence of excommunication against them. In the case of one individual he complied; in the case of the others he not only refused to do so, but retained them in their employments about his person. The bishops took the

extraordinary step of presenting a petition to Bedr el Jamal through his head gardener, who was apparently a Christian, entreating him to interfere and compel their Patriarch to do as he had been asked. Cyril himself was absent at the time, visiting and consecrating some newly built churches.

The Wuzir, on receipt of the bishops' petition, issued a mandate desiring the Patriarch and all his bishops to assemble in a synod, at which he would preside. A list of the bishops who attended this meeting has been preserved, and seems to have included almost all those whose sees were in the Delta, and perhaps more than half of those in the Thebaid and Said. Twenty-seven are reckoned for the former, and twenty-two for the latter; but it is known that the real number of bishops in the southern provinces exceeded those of the Delta. The bishops of Babylon, Kandak (now a northern suburb of Cairo), and Gizeh were classed by themselves.

The synod met, as commanded, in a country house belonging to the Wuzir, outside Cairo. It was opened by an harangue from Bedr, in which he severely rebuked the bishops for insubordination and disloyalty towards their Patriarch. He then commanded both parties to draw up a statement of their case and submit it to him, after which he would deliver his judgment. They were then dismissed, and sent in the written statements which had been asked for. After three weeks, during which Bedr cut off the head of his gardener for unbecoming conduct to his Patriarch, he assembled them again, and informed them that his mind was made up. He had not read the statements of either party, and did not intend to do so; his duty was plain, and so was theirs: to live in love and

peace, as became members of the same faith. He spoke to them at some length, pointing out that Christianity commanded charity, good faith, and brotherly love; and recommending them to practise these precepts rather than quote them. *His* duty was to afford them immunity and protection, and he had desired one of his officers to give them each a written document to that effect. At the close of his speech, which, whether dictated by policy or true religious feeling, must have overwhelmed his auditors with confusion, he dismissed the assembly.

Cyril and his bishops withdrew shame-stricken and evidently repentant; for they went at once to return thanks to God in the church of St. Mercurius, and on the following Saturday and Sunday they all solemnly received the Holy Communion in the same church in token of reconciliation. Cyril after this employed himself in drawing up some new canons, which were not, however, received as part of the Canon law of the Egyptian Church till after his death.

A great many Armenians settled in Egypt in the reign of Mustanzir—or, rather, of his able Armenian Wuzir and Deyr Basatin, a Christian establishment still existing to the south of Cairo, was allotted to them as their head-quarters. Abu Salih relates that the Emir who ruled Egypt on behalf of the Kaliph—and who must probably therefore have been Bedr el Jamal—rebuilt the principal church, and kept it in repair until his death, when he was buried in it. An Armenian Patriarch named Gregory was even consecrated (at Alexandria) for the Armenian Church in Egypt, and was received with great honour by the Egyptians. Cyril on this occasion issued a manifesto setting forth that the Churches of Egypt, Abyssinia, Nubia,

Syria, and Armenia were united in bearing testimony to the ancient Catholic faith and in anathematising its corruptions, first by Nestorius and afterwards by Leo and the Council of Chalcedon.

Gregory consecrated an Armenian bishop of Itfeh, and the Armenian succession of Patriarchs in Egypt continued until the invasion of the Kurds at the close of the Fatimite dynasty and the consequent troubles. They always lived in cordial relations with the Egyptians, and the successor of Gregory was consecrated by the Egyptian Patriarch.

Whether the cordial agreement between the Armenians and Egyptians aroused the jealousy of the Moslems again or no, it was certainly followed by a change of policy which was sanctioned, though it may not have been approved, by Bedr. Severus had sent his brother with backsheesh to the Wuzir from Abyssinia; but, instead of meeting with a cordial reception, Bedr reproached him with failing in his contract, and, as usual, held the Egyptian Patriarch responsible. Cyril was summoned, and came attended by two of his bishops to the Court. Bedr demanded why, when he consecrated a new Metropolitan for Abyssinia, he had not given the customary backsheesh to the Moslem Court, and why Severus had neglected to build the mosques which he had promised to erect in Abyssinia as a condition of his consecration. Without waiting for reply or defence, he declared that Cyril must at once send two of his own bishops to Abyssinia to enforce this being done, and until then the Patriarch and all the bishops with him should be kept in custody, and should pay each of them four pounds a day for their maintenance.

The Christians were struck with consternation, but before any action could be taken an embassy arrived from

Basil, King of Nubia, with presents for the Court of Cairo, and a request to the Egyptian Patriarch that he would consecrate one of their number, the son of the late king, as bishop (Metropolitan). Bedr, like other Fatimite Wuzirs before him, had learned that it was not safe to provoke Nubia, and this opportune arrival changed the face of affairs for the Christians. The Patriarch and his bishops, as well as the envoys from Abyssinia, were recalled; and the Wuzir's complaint stated with more courtesy, while the accused were allowed to answer. The ambassador from Abyssinia was eager to explain that, so far from his brother having neglected to fulfil the condition imposed upon him, he had, in fact, built seven mosques instead of the stipulated four. He went on to say, however, that the Abyssinians were so indignant at his proceedings, that they had risen in rebellion, had levelled all the seven mosques to the ground, and would have killed the Archbishop had he not been rescued out of their hands by the Emperor, who had, nevertheless, put him in prison. Bedr professed himself satisfied, and released his prisoners, but stipulated that the two bishops should be sent to Abyssinia to obtain permission from the Emperor for the rebuilding of the mosques. He sent with them an ambassador of his own to inform the Emperor that unless the mosques in question were permitted to stand, all the churches in Egypt should be thrown down. But he had met his match. The Emperor returned for reply that, if he dared such a deed, that if in Egypt one single stone of God's temples were touched, he would himself send to the Court of Cairo every single brick and stone of Mecca; and that with so thorough a destruction of the city that, if but one brick should be wanting, he

would supply its weight in gold. The Kaliph had already revived the law which compelled all Christians and Jews to wear a black girdle, and the extra poll-tax from which they had been lately free, but he did not venture in face of Abyssinia and the Christian kingdoms of the Soudan to proceed with any overt act of persecution. Cyril spent the rest of his life in peace, restoring churches and relieving the poor of his communion. In this time, the use of the Arabic language became so common among the Copts that the Patriarch thought it his duty to learn it.

He died in the year 1092 (A.H. 485), and was succeeded by Michael IV., or Michael the Hermit. Before his consecration, however, the bishops insisted on his signing not only the usual bond for the continuance of the stipend to the Chapter of Alexandria, and a solemn promise to abstain from taking fees for ordinations and consecrations, but a Confession of Faith and a resignation of the rights over certain churches in Babylon and Cairo which had been first assumed by Christodulos. Michael promised to observe all these conditions, though indeed, without the ordination fees, it had become almost impossible for a Patriarch to pay the yearly sum demanded by the grasping Chapter of Alexandria. The first condition which he broke, however, was the one most easy for him to fulfil. When Shenouda, the Bishop of Babylon, applied for the restoration of the said churches, the Patriarch flatly denied that he had ever promised to resign them.

'But,' exclaimed Shenouda, in amazement, 'I have the deed, and the witnesses to the deed.'

'But I,' answered the Patriarch, 'will excommunicate anyone who ventures to come forward in that character against me.'

The Chapter of Alexandria, as one of the interested parties, had also a copy of the fourfold agreement which Michael had signed, and another was in the possession of the Bishop of Xois (Sakka), as the oldest prelate on the Egyptian Bench. By threats and promises Michael got back these two copies into his own possession; but the Bishop of Babylon refused to give up his, and finally left the city and retired to a monastery. As the Ecclesiastical Court of Babylon was, from its nearness to the Moslem capital, the most important of all, great inconvenience was occasioned by the absence of the bishop, and the citizens addressed so strong a representation to Michael that he permitted Shenouda to return and exercise his functions without further remark.

The strong rule of Bedr el Jamal prevented actual outbreak of either Christians or Moslems for the remainder of his life, but he died in 1094 (A.H. 487),[1] and not many days afterwards was followed to the grave by the feeble Kaliph, whose nominal reign had lasted sixty years. Little good is known of Mustanzir, but in the earlier part of his life his pleasures were not solely vicious ones. He showed some love of literature and art, in particular of the art of painting, though even in this it seems to have been his Wuzir Yazouri rather than himself who was the patron of artists. There were two of some note in Egypt at this time, Kasir and Ebn Aziz; the latter was a Persian whom Yazouri had invited to Egypt. These painters were often pitted against one another, but in their greatest competition, where each painted the figure of a dancer on a

[1] He seems to have been buried as a Christian in the Armenian church at Basalin. (*See* Abu Salih.)

different panel of the same wall, they were declared equal, and the same rewards were given to each.

The prohibition against making the likeness of man never seems to have been seriously regarded by the majority of the Moslems in Egypt, except when they wanted an excuse for destroying or insulting the sacred pictures of the Christians.

CHAPTER XVIII

EFFECTS OF THE FIRST CRUSADE IN EGYPT

1096 812 490 THE nominal successor of Mustanzir was his second son, Ahmed Abu el Kasim Mostali b' Allah; the real successor was the second son of the able Armenian who had governed Egypt for twenty years. From this time till the extinction of the Fatimite dynasty the Kaliphs took little or no part in public life. They lived in the seclusion of their palaces, surrounded by every Oriental luxury, showing themselves on rare and stated occasions to the people, who were taught to look upon the mysterious Kaliph almost as a God. While, however, the forms of absolute power were maintained with elaborate ceremony, the real government remained in the hands of successive Wuzirs. It is not known why the eldest son of Mustanzir was passed over in favour of Mustali; in the case of Bedr his eldest son had revolted against him in his lifetime, and had thus forfeited all right to succeed his father. In every way the second son, Shahin Shah el Alfdal was better qualified for the government of Egypt than his brother; and almost the first thing he had to do was to crush a revolt among the Moslems headed by Mustanzir's eldest son. He next turned his attention to the recovery of Syria, which had been overrun by different Turkish adventurers, and succeeded in re-establishing the authority

of the Egyptian Kaliph in Jerusalem. But the cruelties of the Turks during the twenty years of their occupation of the sacred city had tried the patience of Western Christendom too far; and the sins of the Ortokide Turks were visited on the head of the Fatimite Arabs. The Patriarch of Jerusalem had been dragged by the hair through the streets of that city and thrown into prison until a sufficient ransom was paid by his flock, and the clergy of every rank and sect were exposed to constant insult and oppression. It is true that far greater evils had been suffered by the Christians in Egypt under both Turkish and Arab dynasties without a single protest from the Christian empires of East or West. But the rumour of these atrocities had hardly penetrated so far. Since the conquest of Egypt by the Moslems, Europe had almost forgotten her existence; moreover, the Egyptians were heretics, and consequently the 'Christianity' of those ages had no Christian feeling for them. Probably even the ill-treatment of the Greek Patriarch in Jerusalem would not have in itself aroused any active resentment. But when a great Latin pilgrimage of 7,000 people, headed by four bishops, met with such ill-treatment that only 2,000 poverty-stricken individuals returned to their Western homes; when the humblest pilgrim was no longer safe from insult and robbery in the sacred city, the fighting nations of the West burned with indignation. The preaching of Peter the Hermit fell on a soil well prepared, and in the same year that saw the Fatimite dynasty re-established in Jerusalem the Council of Clermont proclaimed the crusade which was to liberate the Holy City from the yoke of the Infidel.

The melancholy story and the varying fortunes of the

first crusade are well known and need not be recapitulated in a history of Egypt. The Turks who, driven from Jerusalem, had established themselves in Asia Minor, were defeated, and the armies of the Kaliph of Egypt, or, as he is called by the Crusaders, the Sultan of Babylon, met with no better fate. After forty days' siege Jerusalem was taken on July 14, 1099 (A.H. 492), and 70,000 Moslems perished to satisfy the revenge of the Franks.

El Alfdal feared, and with good reason, for the safety of Egypt. If the Crusaders had marched at once upon that country and made common cause with the Christians both of Egypt and Nubia against the Moslems, the face of the world would have been changed. But the Crusaders distrusted each other, and still more distrusted all native or heretical Christians, so that their kingdom bore in it the seeds of ruin from the beginning, and only the high character of the first king, Godfrey of Bouillon, saved it from immediate collapse. El Alfdal sent an army against the Crusaders, which defeated them in fair fight beneath the walls of Askelon, and all fear of an immediate invasion of Egypt passed away. In their folly the Crusaders even issued a law forbidding all Jacobites, as the members of the National Church of Egypt and the Soudan were called by them, to enter Jerusalem, and thus alienated their natural allies, who had been among the most constant and devout pilgrims.

Within a year after the conquest of Jerusalem the Egyptian Kaliph died and was succeeded by his son El Mansur Amr b' Akhim b' Illah. He was only six years old, but as the real power remained with El Alfdal, the change of Kaliph made no difference except that El Alfdal was

immediately called upon to suppress another revolt in favour of the child's uncle.

Early in 1102 the Metropolitan of Abyssinia died, and an embassy was sent to the Patriarch Michael for another. A monk named George was accordingly consecrated and sent to Abyssinia, but he developed the sin of avarice to such an extent that there was a popular outbreak against him. The Emperor compelled him to disgorge all his ill-gotten gains and sent him back to Egypt, where he was thrown into prison by El Alfdal. The last acts of the Patriarch Michael were in keeping with all the rest that we know of him. He seems to have left Shenouda, Bishop of Babylon, in peace for some years; but now, for some unexplained cause, the old quarrel was revived and Michael determined to get rid of him.

He summoned a synod of the bishops and denounced Shenouda on a fresh and very curious charge. He declared that the Bishop of Babylon had, in the lifetime of the late Patriarch Cyril, celebrated the Holy Communion twice in one day, and for this infringement of canonical rule had been excommunicated by him. Cyril died before he had absolved the bishop; consequently Shenouda was still excommunicated and *ipso facto* deprived of all rightful claim to his office. Whatever the bishops may have thought of their Patriarch's conduct in this raking up an ancient irregularity against the bishop after ten years had elapsed, and refusing to confirm the absolution which Cyril had doubtless prepared, they could not apparently dispute his facts, and most unwillingly subscribed their assent. Michael at once cited Shenouda to appear before the synod and receive sentence of deposition; but Shenouda refused to appear, and hid himself in a private house at Babylon.

Michael proceeded to take possession of one of the churches concerned in the original dispute—St. Sergius and St. Bacchus of Babylon. On the following day the Wuzir El Alfdal was returning to Cairo from some expedition, and the Patriarch went out in state to meet and congratulate him. Hardly had he returned home, however, when he was seized with the plague and died on the following day.[1]

His successor was not elected till September, as the bishops found it difficult to choose between two candidates both of the monastery of Macarius. One was under the canonical age of fifty, so they ultimately decided in favour of the other, whose name was Macarius. He was not at all anxious for the honour, and pleaded that he also was canonically ineligible, being the offspring of a second marriage. But on inquiry it was found that it was the second marriage of his father and not his mother, so his excuse was disallowed. The next difficulty was with the rapacious Alexandrians, who as usual demanded that the Patriarch elect should sign the bond which assured them their yearly pension. Macarius refused to bind himself to that or any sum, but promised to give them as much as the

[1] Makrizi tells a very curious story of this Patriarch. He declares that during the lifetime of Mustanzir, the Nile failing again, the Kaliph sent the Patriarch up through the Soudan to Abyssinia to try and discover the cause. The King of Abyssinia came to meet him, and asked the reason of his coming. 'The Patriarch then told him that there lacked water in the Nile, and that the people of Egypt suffered on that account. Then the king ordered a certain enclosed valley whence the Nile flows into Egypt to be opened. No sooner was this done than the Nile rose three yards in one night, and went on rising until it overflowed the country and the crops. Then the Patriarch returned, and El Mustanzir bestowed on him a robe of honour, and otherwise treated him well.'

present condition of the Church would allow. When they persisted and tried to bully him, as they had been accustomed with former Patriarchs, Macarius quietly left them and set about his return to the monastic life. Eventually the Alexandrians had to content themselves with his written promise to pay them less than one half of the original pension, and Macarius reluctantly assumed the office to which he was called.

Next year Acre was taken by storm after a long siege, and fell into the hands of the Crusaders. The people of Tripoli were so hard pressed by the Count of St. Giles that they appealed to Egypt for help, and though El Alfdal despatched a fleet to their assistance it was too late; Tripoli, after an obstinate resistance, was taken by storm in the year 1110 (A.H. 503). Hardly any possessions were now left to Egypt in Syria, and El Alfdal was well aware that only dissensions among the Crusaders saved Egypt from an invasion. The Christians of Egypt, on the contrary, looked with rising hope on the struggle in Syria; though the National Church could expect but little mercy at the hands of the Latin Christians had they conquered. Indeed, Baldwin, who had succeeded Godfrey in the kingdom of Jerusalem, shortly took a step which removed all doubt of his intentions. He obtained from Pope Pascal in 1116 a bull whereby all the new conquests from the Moslems were annexed to the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem. Armed with this authority, Baldwin in the year 1117 (A.H. 511) began his invasion of Egypt. He laid siege to Farama, the Moslem city which had risen near the ruins of the ancient Pelusium. When it fell into his hand he put most of the inhabitants to the sword, and burnt all the mosques of the city. But immediately after his first success he became so

seriously ill that the project of conquest had to be given up. He set out on his return to Jerusalem, but died while still in Egypt, before he had even reached the frontier at El Arish.

For the rest of the life of Alfdal Egypt remained at peace, and the Christians were exempt from persecution. The Kaliph Amr, who was now nearly thirty-five, grew restless in the Oriental seclusion and luxury which had kept him a cypher in his own kingdom. Instead, however, of openly announcing his determination to rule, he had recourse to the usual Oriental methods of asserting himself. He hired some of the sect of the Assassins who were then spreading terror through Syria to fall upon his great Wuzir and murder him secretly. The deed was done, but a few years afterwards Amr himself perished in the same way, and while El Alfdal left a son to succeed him in the real government of the country, Amr left no male heir, and his cousin Abd el Mejid ebn el Kasim el Hafiz le dyn Illah, known as Hafiz, took the kingdom.[1]

Shortly before the death of El Alfdal there was a terrible earthquake shock in Egypt, which was felt most severely in the city of Babylon. Among the casualties, it was found afterwards that the church of El Mokhta, in the island of Rhoda, was thrown down, though some, says Makrizi, suspected El Alfdal of having taken the opportunity to demolish it 'because it stood in his garden.'

The Egyptian government continued to be carried on chiefly by a series of assassinations, in which, among others, both the son and grandson of El Alfdal perished; but while the Moslems thus quarrelled among themselves, the

[1] It was Alfdal who, in the year 1107 A.D., forbade the use of the solar year in all public or official transactions.

Christians still enjoyed security. Macarius, whose honourable reign lasted more than twenty-four years, died in 1129, and for more than two years the Patriarchate remained vacant for some unexplained reason. Even when the synod met to elect a successor it found itself composed entirely of priests, deacons, and laity, no bishop having answered the summons, and consequently they were unable to proceed. Some of them undertook the journey to St. Macarius to seek advice in these unusual circumstances. Eventually a man named Gabriel was elected (called in Arabic, Abu-el-ala-Said ebn Tarik), who was of an old Coptic family and had passed much of his life as a layman in Government service. Having retired or been dismissed, he became a deacon of the church of St. Sergius in Babylon, where he was greatly respected for his learning and piety. He knew Arabic as well as Coptic, and was a great collector of manuscripts. About this time the distracted Kaliph had put an end to the quarrels among his Moslem subjects for the post of Wuzir by appointing a Christian Armenian, brother to the Patriarch of the Armenians, and this greatly bettered the position of the Christians. But after a few years, though no one questioned the ability and good government of this Wuzir, whose name is given differently in different histories, the jealousy of the Moslems was inflamed to such a pitch that a popular riot broke out on the pretext that the whole country would become Christian if Christians were to be openly favoured in this manner.

The revolt was headed by a man named Rodowan, who claimed the office of Wuzir for himself. The Christian who held it, and who is called Taj ed Doula by the Christians, declared that he would not be the cause of bloodshed or

strife betwixt Moslem and Christian, and resigned his post. He retired into the Thebaid intending to take refuge with another brother who was governor of Kus or Kusae. But Rodowan was beforehand with him, and excited a tumult against the Christians in the city of Kus. When Taj ed Doula arrived he found that his brother had been barbarously murdered, and the inhabitants refused to receive him. At first Taj ed Doula proposed to lay siege to the city with his followers, but abandoning the idea he dismissed his friends and went away alone to embrace the monastic life.

Meanwhile Rodowan made a triumphal procession through the fourfold city of Masr and Babylon, and allowed his troops to sack the houses of the Christians wherever found. His first acts were to restore the disabilities of the Christians, to dismiss the whole regiment of Christian officials who carried on the business of the government, and to double all the taxes paid by them. But just as in the early days no Moslem could build a mosque without stealing the pillars of the Christian churches to uphold it; so no Moslem Government has ever been able to exist without the support of the despised Christians. The measures of Rodowan defeated his own policy, anarchy reigned supreme, and a counter-revolution soon drove him from his office, though not before he had done his best to ruin the country and slain a great number of the Armenians who, since the time of Bedr el Jamal, had settled in Egypt.

The Kaliph, utterly unable to restore order, sent to beg Taj ed Doula to return to office; but the latter replied that it was impossible, since he was now a monk. He consented, however, to return to Court, where he lived in monastic

retirement and aided in the conduct of affairs only by his advice.

The Armenians in Egypt were still a numerous and influential body, with a Patriarch of their own. On his death they begged Gabriel to consecrate the Bishop of Atfih, an Armenian and the brother of Taj ed Doula, to succeed him. Gabriel, evidently uncertain whether his compliance might not be regarded as a schismatical act by the National Church of Armenia, excused himself from doing so; but made no protest when some of his bishops, on being applied to by the Armenians, consented to perform the ceremony. In all cases we find Gabriel anxious to abstain from even the appearance of evil. Many deeply religious Patriarchs, though refusing to *exact* ordination fees, accepted them when offered after the ceremony. But though Gabriel, during his sixteen years' reign, consecrated no fewer than fifty-three bishops, he refused in every case to accept the presents offered.

In his time an embassy arrived from the Emperor of Abyssinia charged with important letters both to the Kaliph and the Patriarch of Egypt. It has been mentioned that the Metropolitan, or Archbishop, of Abyssinia was not allowed to have more than seven bishops under him for the whole kingdom. This number had been fixed, it must be feared, with the express purpose of making it impossible for the Abyssinian Church to throw off her dependence on the Mother Church of Alexandria. For, by the canons common to both Egypt and Abyssinia, a minimum number of twelve bishops was required for the legitimate consecration of a Patriarch; this ceremony, therefore, could never be performed by the Abyssinians themselves; and even a Metropolitan could not be con-

secrated without the consent of the Patriarch of Alexandria. In the old times the Metropolitan elect journeyed himself to Egypt to receive consecration, but for some time now it had been the custom to choose an Egyptian in Egypt for the post.

In the days when communication between the Christian kingdoms of Africa had been comparatively safe and rapid, the inconveniences attending such a state of things had been little regarded. But the present Emperor, observing that seven bishops were not enough for the needs of his kingdom, had suggested to his Metropolitan to consecrate more, and had received for answer that he was forbidden by the canons to do so without the consent of the Patriarch of Alexandria. This consent the Emperor undertook to obtain, and hence the present embassy, in which he strongly urged both upon the Kaliph and the Patriarch the need of more bishops, and begged that all restrictions as to their number might be removed. The Kaliph, who, since the flight of Rodowan, had endeavoured, with the informal help of Taj ed Doula, to govern Egypt himself, sent for the Patriarch Gabriel and directed him to return a favourable answer to the Emperor's request. But Gabriel firmly refused, and pointed out the inevitable consequence of such a step: that Abyssinia, having a sufficient number of bishops to do so, would next proceed to elect a Patriarch of her own, and sever her connection with Egypt. No doubt Gabriel believed himself to be doing right in thus preventing what he would have looked upon as schism, but by his refusal he inflicted a serious blow upon the Church in Abyssinia, and prevented its reform or development.

Gabriel issued thirty canons, which became part of the

canon law of the Copts. One of these forbids ecclesiastics of all degrees to attend games or dances; another forbids a custom then prevalent in Upper Egypt of spending the day of a wedding in games and dances and putting off the religious ceremony until the evening. By these canons it is also forbidden to pray for the dead on Sunday; to administer baptism during the public service of the church; to bury the dead within the churches; and the twenty-fourth canon enjoins that priests are in future to have no women residing in their houses except their wives, mothers, sisters, aunts, and grandmothers. We find no mention of daughters, but may conclude that they were among the privileged classes of such women.

Gabriel died in 1146, and his successor was chosen by the ceremony of the Heikel held at Babylon. The lot fell upon a monk of blameless life, but so ignorant that he could not read either Coptic or Arabic. This, however, does not seem to have been regarded as a disqualification, especially as he knew the services of the Church by heart; and his public entry into Babylon was solemnised with more than the usual pomp. But barely three months afterwards he was poisoned—it is said by one of his own monks, who could not endure the strictness of his discipline. One of the other two candidates at his election, whose name was John, was consecrated in his place.

In 1148 a new crusade was proclaimed, and excited fresh alarm among the Saracens. But it was a melancholy failure, and Egypt was suddenly confronted with a much more pressing danger from Northern Africa, where the Normans, under their Count Roger, made good their footing, and whence they threatened Alexandria. At the same time Rodowan suddenly appeared in Masr, and,

calling on all the discontented to join him, he made himself master of all four cities, and Hafiz shut himself up in his palace without resistance. But Rodowan was slain by one of his own following, and the danger of invasion from Pentapolis also passed away. Shortly afterwards Hafiz died, leaving four sons, the eldest of whom was named Ismail ebn Mansur el Zafir l'Amr Allah, commonly called Zafir.

CHAPTER XIX

THE SCHISM OF MARK EBN KUNBAR

A.D. 1149
A.M. 865
A.H. 544

ZAFIR—or Dafer, as the name is sometimes spelt—was only eighteen when he came to the throne, and he devoted himself to a life of pleasure, leaving the government of the country to his Wuzir. This was a man named Abbas, who after some hard fighting among the Moslems for the office succeeded in murdering his successful rival and making himself supreme in the country. Zafir might have spent as long and useless a life as Mustanzir in his pursuit of the degrading pleasures which were all he cared for, if he could but have refrained from violating the family honour of his powerful Wuzir. But not even consideration for his own safety could restrain his lusts, and within four years he and his two next brothers were slain at a banquet to which Abbas had invited them. The little one, Issa, who was but five years old, was spared, but the shock of seeing his brother's corpses reduced him to a state of semi-idiocy. He was proclaimed Kaliph under the names of El Fayez-nasr-Allah, but Abbas soon found that he had gone too far. The troops, and particularly the negro battalions, declared against him, and summoned an Emir named Thalai (also spelt Talahia or Thelay), the Governor of Minieh, to the Wuzirate.

Abbas, finding himself deserted, fled with all the

treasure he could lay hands upon to Syria. The sister of Zahir betrayed him to the Franks, who fell upon his party, carried off all his treasure, and either killed Abbas on the spot or sent him back to Zahir's sister to be executed in Egypt.

Thalai assumed charge of the infant Kaliph and the kingdom, but his ambition was not satisfied with the title of Wuzir. He called himself Melek-el-Saleh ("the Blessed King"), but he did not do much to justify this title. The Eastern Delta was at this time greatly harassed by plundering incursions of the Frank garrisons of Askelon and Gaza. Thalai did not venture to expose his troops to meet them in open field, so he purchased peace by the payment of tribute to the King of Jerusalem. He also oppressed the Christians considerably, and did them one injury which, more than actual persecution, aroused their horror and indignation.

The village of Matarieh had been regarded as sacred since the time that the Holy Family had rested there on their way to Babylon. Pilgrims came there from all parts of the world (we have a very interesting account of a pilgrimage undertaken by a European in this century), but it was also famed for its balsam gardens, which to a certain extent shared its sanctity, and the unfailing spring of pure water which was regarded as the miraculous gift of Jesus. The place, like Babylon on the south, was a pre-eminently Christian district, and a line of churches stood on the route from Matarieh to Cairo. Thalai took by force one dedicated to St. George, close to Matarieh, and turned it into a mosque.

The National Church was a good deal exercised at this time about certain questions of ritual. The monks of

one district had added the words 'life-giving' to the Holy Communion service, and the bishop of their diocese (Samanhoud) objected to the innovation and wrote to the Patriarch about it. John called a synod to discuss the matter, and it was decided that there was no harm in the addition of the words, and that the use of them should be permitted. This question was speedily and amicably settled, but another controversy shortly broke out which had more serious consequences.

The question related both to the use of incense and the practice of confession. In the first three centuries of Christianity the use of incense in churches was not permitted, because it savoured too much of the practices of paganism. But for sanitary reasons it was afterwards introduced, and the people in the churches were regularly fumigated to minimise the chances of infection in such mixed gatherings. The first religious sanction we find of its use is in the benediction which the priest pronounced over it before it was carried round the church for that purpose: 'May the Lord bless this incense to the extinction of every noxious stench, and kindle it to the odour of its sweetness.' This benediction is not found in any liturgy earlier than the fifth century; but in the sixth century the practice had assumed a religious aspect and been given a symbolic meaning. It was supposed to represent the ascension of prayer from the churches of the earth to the throne of God, and the priest is further directed to say: 'Let my prayer be set forth in Thy sight as the incense.' The practice of private confession to a priest, though older in the Eastern Churches than in the Western, was not enjoined as a religious obligation, except for a short time in the fourth century. It was found that the public con-

fession of sins to the congregation in church, which was the earliest practice, often gave rise to grave scandals and sometimes to fresh crimes. For instance, St. Basil forbade a woman who had confessed to him that she had been guilty of adultery to acknowledge her sin in church, lest her husband should murder her. Private confession grew up first in this way: if Christians were troubled by consciousness of unacknowledged sins, they sought counsel of their priest, and he determined which faults should be acknowledged openly to the congregation and which should be confessed to God alone. It then gradually obtained that a particular priest should be attached to the principal churches for the purpose of hearing such confessions. But in the Eastern Church, of which the Egyptian Church was then part, this office was formally abolished at the close of the fourth century. In the Egyptian Church private confessions continued to be heard by the priest; but there was no absolute rule on the subject, nor was it ever a necessary preliminary to the reception of the sacraments. Indeed, the only time in a man's life when it was formally required of him was before his marriage, since marriage in the East is equivalent to attaining his majority. Before that time he is a minor, and presumably therefore in a state of baptismal innocence. Still, confession of sins after marriage was generally required before reception of the Holy Communion, whether to a priest in private or in the church. And in the church, after public and general confession by the priest in the name of the whole congregation, the people remained on their knees, confessing silently to God the particular sins of which they knew themselves to be guilty. During this time the fumigating process went on, the censer being

carried all round the church. In course of time, assisted no doubt by the symbolic utterances of the priests, the incense came to be regarded as an essential part of the confession—the vehicle, as it were, through which it ascended to God. By the twelfth century a curious custom had grown up peculiar to the Egyptian Church, by which the censer had taken the place of the priest even in private confession, which occasionally, as happens everywhere, was the cause of scandal, and was looked upon with suspicion by the more respectable laity, particularly where their womenkind were concerned. It had become customary therefore that confession should be made solemnly by the individual on his knees and in the solitude of his chamber before a lighted censer. The incense ascended to God, and was supposed in some special way to call down upon the penitent the absolution and forgiveness of God.

It was this custom which was fiercely attacked by an Egyptian priest in the reign of John V. The name of the 'reformer' was Mark, generally called Ebn Kunbar, to distinguish him from the Mark who shortly afterwards became Patriarch.[1] He was a priest in the province of Said, though he had been ordained by the Bishop of Damietta, and, being a man of great eloquence, he attracted crowds by his preaching. His exhortations, however, had more to do with the mode of repentance and confession than with the duty itself. He constantly and urgently denounced the practice of private confession before a lighted censer, and assured his hearers that auricular confession to a priest and absolution through the priest were absolutely necessary to salvation. As

[1] A full and interesting account of Mark ebn Kunbar will be found in Abu Salih, pp. 20 to 43 of the translation.

the customary practice of confession before the censer had been formally sanctioned by the Patriarch himself, this crusade of Mark's against it gave great offence to the bishops and the educated members of the Church; and they appealed to the Patriarch to excommunicate him. As John seems to have hesitated to take so extreme a step against a man merely to punish a rash and inconsiderate zeal for older customs, charges against Mark's private character were brought forward. The Patriarch was informed that Mark had put away his wife and taken monastic vows, not for any fault on her part, but so that she might not stand in the way of his ambition, since married priests were not available for bishoprics. The Patriarch appears to have satisfied himself that the fact was correct—the motive, of course, could only be matter of conjecture—and on this ground he pronounced sentence of excommunication against Mark.

To the amazement of the Church, Mark, the upholder of sacerdotal authority, took no notice of the excommunication. He continued to preach to the people, who flocked to him in such multitudes that there seemed danger of a great schism from the Church. He further attacked the custom of circumcision, which had prevailed in Egypt from the earliest times, and declared it to be a relic of Judaism, contrary to the Apostolic precepts. He was regarded almost as a prophet by the common people of the Said, and his name was in all men's mouths.

At this crisis the Patriarch died, and was succeeded by Mark called Ebn Zaara, to distinguish him from his popular contemporary of the same name. On his accession the bishops of Upper Egypt wrote a memorial to him concerning Mark ebn Kunbar, who was holding revival meetings all

over the country in open defiance of all spiritual authority. The new Patriarch summoned Mark ebn Kunbar to Cairo, and personally remonstrated with him on the error of his ways. Mark was touched by the Patriarch's exhortations, and flung himself at his namesake's feet, promising amendment for the future. He was then apparently released from excommunication and sent back to his work. But the persuasions of the multitudes who thronged to welcome his return were too much for him. He was rather in the position of a Dissenting minister who knows that he ought not to attack the Established Church, but who also knows that to abstain will sacrifice his reputation and his influence and leave him without a congregation. He very soon therefore recommenced his sermons on the absolute necessity of priestly confession and absolution, and the people again flocked to hear him, bringing him not only presents of money and produce, but paying to him their tithes and Church dues instead of to the lawful authorities.

The Patriarch summoned a synod to consider the matter, and sixty bishops assembled for that purpose. Their unanimous vote was for the deposition and excommunication of the rebellious priest. Then Mark ebn Kunbar took a step which he must afterwards have bitterly regretted; he appealed to the Moslem authorities, declaring in the memorial which he presented to them that he had preached nothing contrary to the canons, and demanding that the case should be tried before them. The Moslems were very ready to interfere, but the Patriarch and his bishops absolutely refused to acknowledge their jurisdiction. They were, however, willing to meet the view of Mark ebn Kunbar so far as seemed consistent with their religion,

and consented to accept the arbitration of Michael the Monophysite Patriarch of Antioch.

Michael endeavoured to treat the question with courtesy and fairness, and succeeded in displeasing both parties. He suggested that the one side depreciated, the other exaggerated, the importance of auricular confession; and while writing with all deference to the Egyptian Patriarch evidently suggested concessions on both sides. This led to a temporary coolness between Antioch and Alexandria; while on the other side Mark ebn Kunbar, finding that Michael of Antioch would not support him in his defiance of authority, did not wait for the sentence of deposition, but went over to the Melkite (or Greek) Church in Egypt with a large number of his followers. But the Greek Church was at a very low ebb; her Patriarchs had no real power in the country, and spent most of their time at the Court of Constantinople, leaving their scanty flock to sink lower and lower in superstition and ignorance. Mark ebn Kunbar did not meet with the appreciation he expected, and before very long he submitted himself to his own Patriarch and begged to be received back into the National Church. Mark ebn Zaara received him with affectionate welcome and granted him absolution. But Mark ebn Kunbar soon became aware that by his recent action he had lost all his power. The strongest feeling of a respectable Copt is unswerving loyalty to his National Church; and Mark was no longer to them a hero and a reformer, but a traitor. Mark could not bear it, and went back again to the Greek Church; then, not many months afterwards, returned again with penitence to his own Patriarch. This time, however, Mark ebn Zaara was firm. He refused to admit his namesake again to the Church which he had thrice betrayed,

and Mark ebn Kunbar fell into complete obscurity. Nothing more is known of him except that he did not die for many years after his moral suicide.[1]

These years were very eventful ones for Egypt. In 1160 (A.H. 555) the Kaliph Fayez died at the age of eleven years, and Thalai caused a boy of about the same age, grandson of Hafiz, but by no means the next heir according to the Moslem law of succession, to be proclaimed in his stead. The power of the Fatimites had long departed, and this child—Abd Allah el Adid el din Allah—was the last who bore even the barren title of Kaliph. Thalai was henceforth recognised as the Sultan of Babylon, and the very name of the Kaliph was unknown to the Crusaders.

[1] It was not till the reign of Pope Innocent III. of Rome that auricular confession to a priest was declared an essential doctrine of the Western Church. Innocent III. was elected Pope in 1198. It has never been declared essential in the Egyptian Church.

CHAPTER XX

THE BURNING OF BABYLON

60 THE Sultan Thalai did not survive Fayez more than a year.
6 He was assassinated by order of the late Kaliph's sister,
5 and on his death the usual struggle for the kingdom took place. His own son held it for a short time, but the two principal candidates were the Emirs Dargham and Shawer (also spelt Shauer, Chaouer, Chauer, Sauer, and Siwa by different writers). Eventually Dargham established himself as supreme ruler, and Shawer fled the country, though he did not give up his ambitious designs. He sought refuge at the court of Damascus, where a new and warlike dynasty of Turks had established themselves early in the century. The present Sultan was Nour-ed-din, who had extended his conquests on every side and was the most formidable enemy of the Crusaders. These Turks acknowledged the Abbaside Kaliph at Baghdad, and would therefore have no scruple about invading the dominions of the Fatimite Kaliph, even had they not been invited to do so by the fugitive Shawer. Nour-ed-din readily agreed to send an army into Egypt, and committed the command to Shiracouh (Chiracou, Chyrkouch, Shirkoh, or Siracou), a general of great ability, who was a Kurd by nationality. With him went his elder brother Ayoub and the son of the latter, Yusef Saleh-ed-din. As a reward for the

services they were to render him, Shawer promised to pay Nour-ed-din one-third of the revenues of Egypt when he was established on his throne.

Dargham was already very unpopular in Egypt from the numbers of judicial murders he had committed and an unsuccessful expedition which he had just concluded against the Franks. Amaury (or Amalric), King of Jerusalem, had demanded from him a continuance of the tribute which Thalai had paid to Baldwin of Jerusalem, and, the money not being immediately forthcoming, had invaded Egypt with a numerous army. Dargham met the Franks not far from the frontier, and, being defeated by them, fell back upon Belbeis. Here he cut the banks and inundated the country between himself and the Franks, who were preparing to withdraw when the Moslem army of Shiracouh made its appearance. Dargham, justly dreading a junction of the two armies against himself, sent to Amaury, promising him double the tribute in future if he would help him now against the Sultan of Damascus. But before the negotiation was concluded Shiracouh fell suddenly upon the army of Dargham, which was entirely routed. Dargham fled to Cairo, but was overtaken and killed in the suburbs. As usual, the inhabitants of Egypt proper cared little for the particular oppressor who might rule in Cairo, and Shawer found himself at once master of the kingdom. In fact, he believed himself so strong that he refused to fulfil the promises he had made to the Damascene Turks, and desired them to withdraw from the country. On this Shiracouh did indeed break up his camp before Cairo, but only to overrun the province of Sharkieh and seize Belbeis. His troops, let loose upon the unfortunate Egyptians, committed the most barbarous excesses

on Moslem and Christian alike. In adopting the religion of his conquerors the Moslem Copt had lost his faith and his nationality, without acquiring the one attribute of his conquerors which would have been useful to him—the capacity for fighting. No attempt was made by the men of either religion to defend their homes or the honour of their wives ; their crops were destroyed, their houses sacked, and hundreds of them carried off to be sold for slaves. It was only when their faith was attacked that the Christians found courage to defy their enemies, and many on this occasion joyfully suffered martyrdom at the hands of the Turks.

Shawer sent to the Frankish army, who had withdrawn into Syria, to invite their help in expelling Shiracouh. Amaury readily responded, invaded Egypt for the second time, and laid siege to Belbeis. After two months spent thus, intelligence was brought to the besieging army that Nour-ed-din himself with a numerous army was marching to the relief of his general. This news caused the Franko-Egyptian army to offer Shiracouh a free passage out of the country on condition that he gave up all his prisoners ; and Shiracouh, who had heard nothing of the approach of Nour-ed-din, found it best to accept the terms. He retired into Syria, and for a brief space Egypt had respite ; but all that Shiracouh had seen of the fertility and natural wealth which not even centuries of bad government had been able to destroy, only the more inflamed him with the determination to possess so fair a kingdom. On the other hand, the Franks also had learned that a country far better worth having than Syria lay open to the strong man armed.

In 1166 they were all in Egypt again. The Franks

had attempted to stop the advance of Shiracouh in Syria; but by a forced march through the desert the latter eluded the forces of Amaury, and the armies entered Egypt almost at the same moment.

Shawer, seeing himself thus menaced, chose, as before, to ally himself with the Franks rather than with his co-religionists. The Frankish army was admitted within the gates of Cairo, and were promised a very large sum of money if they would assist in expelling the Turks. But the Franks had by this time become aware that there was a mysterious power behind Shawer, who could at will annul all promises made by the Sultan-Wuzir, and they insisted on having the compact ratified in the presence of the Kaliph himself. Shawer did all in his power to prevent this. The Kaliph was represented as far too sacred a person to be beheld by any but true believers; but the blunt determination of the Franks cut through all the wiles of Oriental courtesy, and the demand was grudgingly conceded.

The ambassadors chosen were Hugh of Cæsarea, Geoffrey Ffoulkes, a Knight Templar, and several other nobles, from one of whom William of Tyre took his description of the scene. Everything had been done to dazzle and astonish the Frankish barbarians; one long corridor after another was traversed between lines of black soldiers and eunuchs. The treasures which had been collected since the loss of everything by Mustanzir were displayed – precious stones as large as hens' eggs, exquisite vases of glass and china, and beautiful embroideries. A silken curtain concealed the entrance to the sacred presence chamber, before which the Sultan-Wuzir, who conducted the ambassadors, prostrated himself three times, and yielded up his sword. Then they were permitted to enter, and the

Kaliph, duly instructed in his part, agreed to the proposed terms. But a further indignity awaited him. These barbarian strangers, who had insisted on disturbing the sacred presence, further demanded 'his hand on the bargain.' Explanation and entreaty were of no avail, the sacred hand had to be bared and laid in the rude clasp of the Frank ambassadors, who then consented to withdraw.

Meanwhile under cover of the night Shiracouh had crossed the Nile and marched down to Gizeh, where he entrenched himself opposite Cairo—or, rather, opposite Fostat. Amaury attempted to bridge the river with boats, which the troops of Shiracouh destroyed as fast as they were made; and these desultory hostilities went on for fifty days. At the end of them Shiracouh broke up his camp and marched into Upper Egypt, which submitted to him without a blow. Amaury went after him, leaving a strong garrison in Cairo; but in the battle which followed, Shiracouh was victorious. Amaury fell back on Cairo, and Shiracouh ravaged Upper and Lower Egypt at his pleasure. A year had gone by in these hostilities, and the Franks of Syria, hearing that Amaury had occupied Cairo, proposed to join him and take possession of the kingdom of Egypt at their leisure. This news disposed both Shiracouh and Shawer to come to terms and combine against the Franks. Shiracouh agreed to evacuate the kingdom and to restore the city of Alexandria, which he had garrisoned with his own troops under the command of his nephew Saleh-ed-din. With the promise of 100,000 dinars (about £60,000) Amaury was bribed to withdraw, and went back with most of his army into Syria, leaving a garrison in Cairo until the money should be paid. But

he found the Franks of Syria indignant that the chance of conquering Egypt should be resigned for a bribe; and either profiting by some delay in the payment of the sum, or persuading himself that it was a venial sin to break faith with infidels, he returned with fresh forces into Egypt and laid siege to Belbeis.[1] Unprepared, the town surrendered after three days, and met with the fate dictated by a ruthless policy. To strike terror into the recalcitrant Moslems of Cairo, Belbeis was given up to sack and pillage; and all the inhabitants were massacred, save those who were spared as useful slaves. It is possible to march from Belbeis to Cairo in two days, but Amaury advanced with the utmost deliberation. Some say that his army was suffering from the licence attending the sack of Belbeis, and could not be moved without time to recruit. Others affirm that what Amaury really wanted was not Egypt, but a larger sum of money, and desired to give time for negotiations with Shawer to that effect. Be that as it may, the delay was fraught with disastrous consequence to the native Christians, always the first to suffer and last to profit by the policy of the Moslem tyrants who had misgoverned Egypt for so long. The fourfold capital of Egypt was for strategic purposes only twofold. To the north were the two Masrs, or Cairo; to the south,

[1] More than one Western historian says that it was Pelusium which Amaury took and sacked on this occasion; though the Egyptian historians clearly speak of Belbeis, a town almost as little known to the Western writers as the Egyptian Babylon, but then one of the strongholds of Egypt. The same thing is noticeable more than once—that where Western historians speak of Pelusium, Eastern historians give the same account of events at Belbeis; yet the two towns were far apart. Pelusium was the town that an army marching from Syria to Alexandria would naturally seek to occupy, and Belbeis is on the line from Syria to Cairo.

with a desert space between, which had once been covered with houses and gardens, lay Fostat and Babylon—the former half-Moslem, half-Christian; the latter almost entirely inhabited by Christians. Cairo was already occupied by the Christian garrison which Amaury had left behind him, and Shawer seems to have regarded the common faith of the Franks and the Copts as a more important factor than their theological differences, in which it is greatly to be feared that he was mistaken. He evidently supposed that the Christians, who now hemmed him in on all sides, would unite to sweep the tottering dominion of the Moslems from the country. While affecting therefore the greatest readiness to treat with Amaury, he took measures to prevent any such amalgamation. He appealed to the Moslems of the whole country to rise in holy war against the Christians, and he caused the city of Babylon to be set on fire in so many places that the whole town seemed to burst at once into flame.[1] Day after day and night after night the

[1] Some writers have endeavoured to represent this as merely the burning of the suburbs of Cairo *between* Shawer and the invading army; but there is no doubt that it was Babylon and part of Fostat which were burnt, and these lay to the south of Cairo, with a desert between. In this fire one of the principal churches of Deyr Abu Sefayn was burnt down. Deyr Abu Sefayn stood, not in the city proper, but on the road running on the river-bank (in early days) by Fostat and Babylon. The church was rebuilt, and the Deyr still stands on the same site, though now the river has receded, and the road which runs by the crumbling walls of the old Deyr is occupied by the Helwan railway line. The walls are strong and old, for the place was only partly destroyed by the great fire. It stands north-west of the Mosque of Amr, and very near it. We do not hear that the Mosque of Amr suffered in the fire; nor are the churches of Anbar Shenouda or the Virgin, both of which stand within the walls of Abu Sefayn, mentioned in history as having been burnt. The present incumbent of the church of St. Mercurius, however, maintains that it was the church of the

smoke of that great city went up to heaven. Part of Fostat was involved in the common destruction, and for fifty-four days the fire burned without ceasing. No one has ever known how many perished in the flames or what became of the Christian fugitives, who probably escaped across the river and made their way into the villages beyond Gizeh.[1] For miles that awful glare fascinated the horror-stricken eyes of the native Christians; and when at last the fire burnt itself out, among the glowing heaps of utter ruin the only place in that great city wherein one stone was left upon another was the cluster of churches and houses which had been built within the massive walls of the ruined Roman fortress. To this day the site remains desolate—a wilderness of charred heaps, wherein the casual searcher may find coins and beads and broken potsherds, but little else. Only in one or two places the tender clinging of the Egyptians to the memory of their ancient saints led them to rear again, in such poor materials as they could gather, the churches which before had beautified their city in stone and marble and mosaic. These still exist, served by priests without a flock, since the six churches of the Roman fortress are more than enough for the Christians remaining in this desolated district. Even the very name of the ancient city which was for centuries the chief stronghold of Egypt is now only preserved in one of these outer churches, whose frail walls of dried mud are still known as Deyr Babyloun.

Virgin, and *not* the church of St. Mercurius, which perished in the burning of Babylon.

[1] Some, and among them the Patriarch of the Armenians, fled to Syria, and took refuge with the Christians of Jerusalem. (*See* Abu Salih.)

CHAPTER XXI

THE KURDISH CONQUEST

1168 WHILE Babylon was burning, Shawer was not idle. He
84 continued his negotiations with Amaury until Shiracouh
64 once more returned to Egypt with his fierce army of barbarians. Amaury had raised the sum for which he had formerly agreed to abstain from conquest in Egypt to 1,000,000 instead of 100,000 dinars, and this sum Shawer promised to pay. But Amaury refused to leave Egypt until at least the original sum of 100,000 had been paid down, and Shawer had no choice but to submit. Then Amaury withdrew his troops (of whom it is recorded that they were very angry, since, if the money had not been paid, they had counted on the pillage of Cairo), only to meet with the returning army of Shiracouh at Belbeis. A battle was fought, in which Shiracouh, no doubt to Shawer's secret chagrin, was victorious, and Shiracouh entered Cairo as a conqueror. Both the Kaliph and the population greeted him as their saviour, and Shawer, finding himself in disfavour, determined to put an end to his powerful rival by assassination. Shiracouh, aware of his intention, resolved to be beforehand with him. He arrested him, the Kaliph immediately demanded his head, and his house was given up to be plundered by the Cairo populace. But Shiracouh died within the year 1169 (A.H. 564), and

his nephew Saleh-ed-din found himself master of the kingdom.

Saleh-ed-din was a Moslem of the old warrior type, punctilious in the performance of his religious duties, despising all luxury and all learning alike, and regarding the arts as temptations of the devil. His ambition was boundless, and had been strengthened by a prophecy in his youth that he should die Sultan of Damascus and Babylon, *i.e.* Egypt; or the *Regnum Babylonicum*, as it was called. Though his father and another uncle were in Egypt with him, there does not seem to have been any question about the succession to Shiracouh. The Kaliph Adid was powerless. To the new conquerors of Egypt he occupied the position of an anti-Pope, since their spiritual obedience was due to the Abbaside Kaliph of Baghdad. He was kept a close prisoner in his palace, and the chief places in the Government were filled by Saleh-ed-din's own followers.

Almost immediately after his accession to power he was called to meet a fresh invasion of the Franks. This time they approached by sea, King Amaury being again at their head, and proposed to take Damietta by assault. But Damietta was ready to receive them, and they were forced to commence a regular siege, in which they fared no better. After entering the mouth of the river they found themselves unexpectedly opposed by a huge chain, beyond which they were unable to force their way. The city received supplies without hindrance from the interior, while the Crusaders expected them from Syria in vain, and famine soon decimated their camp. Quarrels, as usual, broke out amongst them, and finally a tremendous storm tore the ships from their moorings and drove them

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one upon another in helpless confusion. A torch skilfully flung set fire to a portion of the floating mass, and eventually, after fifty days of loss and famine, the Crusaders abandoned the enterprise and returned to Syria. Saleh-ed-din, arriving from Cairo with reinforcements, found no enemy to fight, and reproached his Emirs with having allowed the Franks to escape.

Next year he entered Syria in search of reprisals, fought with Amaury near Gaza, and made himself master of that city, returning to Cairo in the spring of the year 1171. Soon afterwards he received a message from Nour-ed-din, still his nominal lord, desiring him to substitute the name of the Abbaside Kaliph for that of the Fatimite Adid in the public prayers of Egypt. Saleh-ed-din at first attempted to excuse himself, alleging his fear of an insurrection in Egypt; but in truth it was far more convenient to have an absolutely helpless and heretic Kaliph in his own power than one whose commands he would not feel justified in disobeying. He only received a still more urgent message from Nour-ed-din, and on September 10 a Persian Emir solemnly proclaimed the Abbaside Kaliph from the pulpit of the principal mosque.

The unfortunate Adid was then in a dying condition, and the news of his deposition was mercifully kept from him during the few days of life that remained to him. By the population of Egypt generally the change of Kaliph was received with profound indifference. The true Egyptians, Moslem and Christian alike, asked nothing more than to be let alone and allowed to cultivate their land in peace so long as they paid such taxes as they were unable to evade. The barbarous Turks, Kurds, Arabs, and freed slaves of European origin, who formed the

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'upper' classes, cared little for any Kaliph, and were ready to serve a Sultan like Saleh-ed-din, under whom they were sure of unlimited fighting, plunder, and pay. Nor did Saleh-ed-din disappoint them. He began by distributing all the treasure of the late Kaliph among his Emirs and soldiers. It was now more than a hundred years since the sack of the celebrated treasury of Mustanzir by Nasr-ed-doula, and all this time the Kaliph had steadily continued to amass jewels and treasures of all kinds, so that the plunder of the last Fatimite Kaliph was very great. A new library also had been formed, probably containing many of the old books, bought back in course of time from those who placed no value upon them. Saleh-ed-din, who looked upon books in the spirit of the Kaliph Omar, distributed these among the most learned Moslem Egyptians of his day, hoping by this means to conciliate their favour. They were said to amount to a hundred thousand volumes; and there are still in the library of Leyden, or were some years ago, ancient manuscripts annotated in Arabic which formed part of the Fatimite library. Thus perished in shame and humiliation the Fatimite dynasty, which barely two hundred years before could have echoed the proud boast of Cæsar—'I came, I saw, I conquered'—in the kingdom of Egypt.

CHAPTER XXII

THE REIGN OF SALEH-ED-DIN

1174 ALMOST the whole of the reign of Saleh-ed-din was spent
90 in war. In Syria a series of brilliant campaigns against
70 the Franks on the one hand, and the son of his old master Nour-ed-din on the other, culminated in the substitution of his own name for that of the Abbaside Kaliph in the public prayers; by which act, in the year 1174 (A.H. 570), he declared himself independent sovereign of Syria, Egypt, and part of Asia Minor. However, he had yet to reduce Jerusalem, the stronghold of the Franks, and many other of their most important cities; and though he returned for a brief visit to Egypt in 1176, he took the field again in Palestine the next year.

Not only in Palestine, but in the south, he was called upon to defend his newly acquired kingdom. After the burning of Babylon and the sufferings inflicted on the Egyptians by the constant wars between the rival Moslem tyrants, the Christian King of Nubia invaded Egypt once more, pillaged Assuan, and would probably have continued his advance if he had not learned that the pusillanimous dynasty of the Fatimites was extinct, and that the new Sultan, a man mighty in war, was sending an army to meet him. The King of Nubia judged discretion the better part of valour, and commenced a retreat; but the army of Saleh-ed-din's

general came up with him before he had crossed the frontier. In the engagement which followed, both parties seem to have claimed the victory, both suffered considerable loss, and both retreated—the king into his own country, the general to report to his master at Cairo.

Saleh-ed-din was far from satisfied, and sent his own brother Shamse-ed-doula with orders to invade Nubia and punish the Christians. Shamse-ed-doula laid siege with his whole army to the fortress of Deyr Ibrim, and took it after three days. It had a strongly fortified citadel on the mountain above the town, which enclosed a splendid church dedicated to the Virgin, whose dome upheld a cross of great size. Shamse-ed-doula plundered the place thoroughly, and set at liberty many Moslems who had been made prisoners in the recent invasion of Egypt. All the Christians who were left alive were sold as slaves, the treasury of the church was sacked, its dominant cross pulled down and burnt, while the call to prayers for the Moslems was sounded from the dome. The bishop of the diocese was seized and tortured, to make him confess where he had hidden his wealth; 'but finding,' says the Moslem chronicler, 'that he really had nothing, he was sold into slavery with the rest.'

Shamse-ed-doula, however, had learnt that the invasion of Nubia was likely to prove a very different thing from the invasion of Egypt, and did not attempt to penetrate farther. He was about to abandon the place, when one of his officers, a Kurd named Ibrahim, asked to be left in possession. Shamse-ed-doula granted his request, and left with him a number of Kurds for garrison. These barbarians lived openly by plundering raids into Nubia for the next two years, never able to effect a footing in the

country, but doing incalculable damage to the inhabitants and carrying off their herds. The King of Nubia at length sent an ambassador to Shamse-ed-doula, who had fixed his residence in Kous, with a present of two slaves, male and female, and a letter in which he proposed peace. Shamse-ed-doula delivered two pairs of arrows in return to the ambassador, with the contemptuous remark that it was all the answer he would send; but with a curious confidence in the good-feeling of the Christians he sent back with the messenger a native of Aleppo named Masoud, with orders to spy out the land and report to him if any invasion of Nubia were practicable.

Masoud prospered better than his errand deserved. The king refused to see him, but permitted him to return in safety, not however without an ineffaceable mark, which must have been a sore grief to a Moslem. Masoud, meeting the king by chance, riding on a horse without harness and almost alone, insisted on approaching and saluting him. Whereupon the king, 'laughing,' caused him to be branded on the hand with the figure of a cross, bestowed on him fifty rotls of flour, and sent him off.

Masoud penetrated no farther than the town of Dongola, which, he says, contained no edifice of any size or importance except the palace of the king. But Saleh-ed-din, like Johar before him, gave up all idea of adding the Christian kingdoms of the Soudan to his empire.

Shortly afterwards Ibrahim the Kurd was drowned, with many of his followers, while crossing the Nile on one of his plundering expeditions. The rest of this party abandoned the fortress, which was reoccupied by the Nubians.

In 1176 (A.H. 572) the Christians of the town of Keft or Koptos raised the standard of revolt against the Moslems, but were promptly suppressed by El Adel, brother of Saleh-ed-din, who visited the unfortunate town with the most terrible reprisals. Makrizi says that he hanged nearly 3,000 of the inhabitants on the trees which surrounded the town, using their own girdles and turbans for ropes.

In 1182 (A.H. 578) the son of Nour-ed-din died, and Saleh-ed-din found a fresh pretext for despoiling his successor of the fragment of Nour-ed-din's kingdom which remained to his successors. He then began a fresh campaign against the Franks, and in the years 1185–6 he took from them Tiberias, Cæsarea, Haiffa, Jaffa, Sidon, Beyrout, Acre, and a number of less important towns. Finally, in the year 1187 he marched against Jerusalem, whose king he had already taken prisoner.

Jerusalem was in no condition to resist. Enormous numbers of the poorer people had flocked into the city, but there were hardly any soldiers and only fourteen knights to be found. The priests and deacons fought bravely, regarding the defence of the Holy City as a lawful cause in which to bear arms, but the populace surrounded the Patriarch and the queen, clamouring for a capitulation; and after the hopeless struggle had lasted fourteen days the queen yielded, on condition that the Christian inhabitants of the city should be held to ransom and not sold as slaves. To this Saleh-ed-din agreed, fixing the ransom for each man at ten dinars, for each woman five, and for each child two dinars. Some fourteen thousand, however, were unable to pay, and half of these Saleh-ed-din, convinced of their uselessness, set free without ransom; the other half were reduced to slavery. After the fall of

Jerusalem the whole of Syria submitted to Saleh-ed-din, excepting only Tyre, Tripoli, and Antioch, which still remained in the hands of the Christians.

The thrill of horror which ran over Europe when it was known that Jerusalem, after ninety-six years, was once more in the hands of the infidels, gave birth speedily to a fresh Crusade. The Emperor of the West, Frederic Barbarossa, took the Cross himself, and wrote Saleh-ed-din a defiance in which he assumes himself to be the direct descendant of the ancient Romans and natural lord of their empire both in East and West. Saleh-ed-din replied to this letter in terms no less defiant and arrogant, assuring him that not only were the Saracens prepared to meet the Christians in the East, but that he intended to cross over to Europe, 'and will take from you all your lands, in the strength of the Lord. . . . For the union of the Christian faith has twice come against us in Babylon; once at Damietta and again at Alexandria. . . . You know how the Christians each time returned, and to what an issue they came.' In the conclusion of the letter Saleh-ed-din styles himself the 'Saviour,' among thirteen other titles, such as 'the corrector of the world and of the law.'

Frederic Barbarossa was drowned on his march, and the Crusade thus received a serious blow at the outset. But the Franks of Palestine began the siege of Acre in August, 1189, without waiting for the new Crusaders, and Saleh-ed-din was unable to dislodge them. The siege lasted two years; and though Saleh-ed-din sent relays of ships from Alexandria laden with provisions, and gathered all his forces on the landward side of the city, he was unable to save it from ultimate surrender. The Crusaders came from all Europe to aid in the struggle—among them,

Philip of France and Richard of England—and finally Saleh-ed-din was compelled to make terms for an honourable capitulation. The city, the 'true Cross,' two thousand noble Christian captives, and five hundred of inferior rank, were to be given up and a ransom paid of two hundred thousand dinars as well. For the payment of the money the Moslems gave all the men of high rank in the city as hostages; but neither captives nor money were sent, and 2,700 of the hostages were publicly hanged outside the city of Acre in revenge. During the siege the Crusaders had lost six Patriarchs and archbishops, twelve bishops, forty counts, and five hundred nobles, besides the rank and file both of clergy and laity who had perished.

The Christian captives, in spite of Saleh-ed-din's bad faith, were freed after all. They were being sent, to the number of twelve thousand, as slaves to Babylon (Egypt) under the escort of a small Turkish force, when King Richard suddenly came upon the convoy as he was reconnoitring the country near Darum. He had but a few soldiers with him, but the fame of his deeds had already struck such terror into the Turks that at the mere sight of his banner the escort abandoned their prisoners and fled for their lives. King Richard pursued and slew some of the Moslems, took twenty of the officers alive, and speedily released the Christians.

Hostilities continued with varying fortunes between Richard and Saleh-ed-din for about a year; and then, both parties being worn out, a truce was agreed upon for three years, during which time pilgrims were to have free access to the Holy Sepulchre. Three great companies of the Crusaders set out at once to perform this duty before returning to Europe, but King Richard counted himself

unworthy to visit the Sepulchre, which he had proved unable to redeem. The third company of pilgrims was led by the Bishop of Salisbury, who had an interview with Saleh-ed-din and obtained from him a further boon. The Sepulchre was now, as it always had been, served by priests of the Greek Church; but the Bishop of Salisbury, regarding them as heretics, succeeding in imposing on the Church by command of Saleh-ed-din two priests and two deacons of the Latin Church. He also established the same number of Latin priests at Bethlehem and at Nazareth.

Before Richard had been gone six months his great enemy was dead. Saleh-ed-din, having within twenty-four years raised himself from a simple officer of the Kurdish contingent to the head of the Saracen Empire, which he had re-established in Egypt, Syria, and—according to his own claim—Russia and India, fell ill at Damascus and died in 1193 (A.H. 589).

It is not often that the wars of an aggressive sovereign add to the material prosperity of his original kingdom, but such was the case with Egypt during the earlier part of the reign of Saleh-ed-din. While the Sultan was warring in Palestine his troops were paid chiefly by plunder, and little was sent from Egypt except food supplies. All the Moslem adventurers who had lived by a kind of permitted brigandage in Egypt followed the new conqueror to the wars, and Egypt was once more enabled to exercise the extraordinary recuperative power which she has always possessed. The government of the kingdom was confided by Saleh-ed-din to a negro eunuch,[1] in whom he had great and apparently well-deserved confidence. This man's name was Boha-ed-din, soon nicknamed Kara-Gouch (or 'the

[1] One Moslem authority calls this man a Greek.

Blackbird') by the Egyptians, who despised the illiterate freed slave thus set over them at the same time that they obeyed him. The reverence of the Egyptians for their great ancestors had not yet died out, and both Christian and Moslem among them resented with bitter sarcasm and empty hatred the profanation of their tombs. Boha-ed-din did not dig for treasure among the tombs, as former Moslem Sultans had done; he probably regarded the stories of such treasure as idle tales. But Saleh-ed-din had ordered him not only to clean and strengthen the canals—which would have earned him the gratitude of the Egyptians had he stopped there—he had also ordered the walls of Cairo to be rebuilt and many other public works to be undertaken which needed stone as well as labour.

It seemed an expensive folly to the negro Wuzir, guiltless of sentiment and ignorant of history, to quarry fresh stone from the mountains when the desert plains on the west of the Nile were thick with pyramids of dressed stone for miles, from the ruins of the ancient Memphis to beyond New Cairo. Almost the whole of these vast structures, except the few which remain at either end, and which were spared because they were the largest and most difficult to destroy, were razed to the ground by the Wuzir of Saleh-ed-din. The stone was used in different public works of that reign, most of which may still be seen. The bridge of forty arches which crossed the water between the Pyramids and the town of Gizeh has long since disappeared, but the embankment of the river is still visible at Boulac. The new citadel which took the place of Ahmed ebn Touloun's earlier buildings on the Mokattam yet retains much of Saleh-ed-din's constructions, besides the well which bears

his name (Joseph) and the magnificent aqueduct which brought water above the city from the Nile.

Great storehouses for corn were also built at Fostat, the ruins of which still bear the name of 'Joseph's Granaries';[1] and, finally, Boha-ed-din conceived the idea of building a vast wall to enclose the whole extent of the fourfold city, though all that was left of Babylon was the Roman fortress. This plan, however, whether from failure of easily obtained material or by order of Saleh-ed-din, was not carried out. Fostat and the ruins of Babylon were left out, and the old wall of the two Masrs was strengthened and repaired.

During the reign of Saleh-ed-din also the governor in charge of Alexandria, desiring 'to hinder the ships of an enemy from mooring near the walls of the town,' deliberately destroyed the four hundred columns which up to that date still stood on the ruined site of the Serapeum, and threw the fragments into the sea where the waves came close up to the walls of the town. Only one—that which we call Pompey's—was left standing when Abd-el-Latif visited the spot a few years after; but some were left entire, though prostrate, on the site, and Abd-el-Latif gazed mournfully on the fragments of 'more than four hundred' on the shore.

The forced labour imposed upon the people for all these works rendered Boha-ed-din more unpopular than ever with all the Egyptians of either faith. He did not actually persecute the Christians, but he oppressed them in as many ways as he dared. He began by trying to dispense with them in the Government service, only to find, as every other Moslem had found before him, that

[1] Tourists are often told that these granaries and the great well were the work of the Patriarch Joseph, before the Exodus.

anything like an effective administration was impossible without the Christians. Still, the humiliating restrictions of dress were enforced; the use of bells, of visible crosses, and the processions of the Christians, were all forbidden. He was more detested than many a worse ruler, and the common people revenged themselves through the puppet-shows of Cairo, in which all the wit and satire of the Egyptians were expended to make him ridiculous. So strangely do certain things endure that the unpopular Wuzir Kara-Gouch, though superior to most of the Moslem petty tyrants who had been set over them, lived for centuries as the villain of the comic street-theatre, in which the Egyptians have always loved to satirise the vices and expose the follies of their rulers. It is said that this street puppet-show of Egypt was the original, through intermediate countries, of our Punch and Judy shows; but generally in Egypt it was a vehicle for ridicule of the prevailing Government under scarcely veiled nicknames. The puppet-show is still called Kara-Gouch, though very few people know the origin of the name.

CHAPTER XXIII

DISSENSIONS OF THE EGYPTIAN AND ABYSSINIAN CHURCHES

1193 SALEH-ED-DIN left sixteen sons behind him, some of
909 whom divided his great empire unequally between them,
589 with the quarrels and civil war usual among Orientals on such occasions. The eldest son took Syria as his share, and the second (or third), Imad-ed-din Osman Melek-el-Aziz, commonly called El Aziz, succeeded his father in Egypt.

El Aziz was very much under the influence of his uncle Seyf-ed-din, otherwise called Melek-el-Adel, and was persuaded by him to lend him aid in despoiling Saleh-ed-din's eldest son of his kingdom. The same uncle took upon himself to interfere greatly with the affairs of Egypt, and persuaded El Aziz to continue the destruction of the Pyramids. As only the largest were now left to destroy, this was not such an easy matter; but it was determined to begin with the smallest of the three left at Gizeh. A great force of sappers and miners and other labourers was collected, and some of the principal Emirs went out and camped near the pyramid to supervise the work.

For eight months the fruitless labour was carried on, and at the end of that time the vast army of labourers had only succeeded in destroying a part of the casing of

the pyramid and making a small breach in one side. This futile performance was greeted with a storm of ridicule by the Egyptians, who saw with delight both that and all other projects against the remaining pyramids definitely abandoned. But El Aziz made himself even more unpopular by forbidding the national festival of the cutting of the Nile. This dates from the remotest times in Egypt, and had been adopted in turn by whatever happened to be the national religion. There are old legends, capable of a very simple explanation, of the sacrifice of a virgin to the Nile in pagan times; then the feast was adopted and sanctified by the Christians, who flung, according to some accounts, the mummied hand of a virgin saint in blessing upon the water. But under whatever guise of religion, the *fête* was a national and popular one. It is rarely seen by visitors, owing to the time of year at which it takes place, but is an extremely pretty sight. The boats are outlined from top to bottom in coloured lights, and move slowly up and down on the broad river-flood, carrying parties of musicians and merry-makers. About the time of Saleh-ed-din the festival was probably in a transition period, half-Christian still, but becoming yearly more infected by the licence of the Moslems, and giving occasion to quarrels and debauchery. It is just in this state of decadence, however, that such national festivals are most dear to the lower orders, and they bitterly resented the attempt to suppress it. The Kaliph El Hakim had made the same attempt two hundred years earlier, when it possessed a more decidedly Christian character, and with as little real success. The water carnival still goes on every year, and no lover of the picturesque would willingly see it abolished.

For some time there seems to have been no Patriarch of the Melkite Church in Egypt, and the consequences were very serious for that well-nigh expiring body. When the country became once more quiet and safe under the Wuzir Boha-ed-din, it occurred to the ecclesiastical authorities of Constantinople that it would be no longer dangerous, and certainly politic, to revive, if possible, the Egyptian branch of their Church. A man named Mark was consecrated on the express understanding that the office was no longer to be an easy sinecure, but that he was to take charge of his flock in Egypt and do his best to revive Greek influence in that country.

It is evident from Mark's letters to Constantinople that little or nothing had been known for some time about the Egyptians. It surprised him to find that even the liturgy they used was the old one bearing the name of St. Mark, and he wrote to know if he might permit its continuance; but was informed that in all things they must conform to the customs of the Imperial Church, and that the liturgy of St. Mark must be set aside for that of St. Chrysostom and St. Basil. Other rites peculiar to Alexandria were mentioned, all much older than the present customs of Constantinople; but in no case was the Egyptian usage allowed to continue.

The Patriarch of the National Church was now John VI., who had succeeded Mark ebn Zaara in 1189. He had been then but recently admitted to the secular priesthood, and must therefore have been married, but was doubtless a widower at the time of his election. His high character, learning, and eloquence had won him the preference over the monastic candidates for the same dignity, and, like most of those Patriarchs whose previous experience had not

been bounded by the walls of a monastery, he ruled the Church well and wisely. Some say that he had been a merchant before he became a priest; in any case, he seems to have had private means, and to have spent them entirely in charitable works. Little is recorded of the early years of his Patriarchate, but soon after the arrival of the new Greek Patriarch the Christians of both Churches had reason to fear a renewal of persecution. Not only in the suppression of the water festival, but in other ways, Melek-el-Aziz showed his intention of following in the footsteps of the persecutor Hakim, when an accident put an end to his life and left a child of seven to succeed him on the Egyptian throne.

Seyf-ed-din, or El Adel, had no idea of allowing the rights of an infant to interfere with his ambition. He hastened from Damascus, and assumed the title of Regent; but shortly after deposed the child, and proclaimed himself Sultan in 1199 (A.H. 596–7).

At this time Abd-el-Latif was living in Egypt, and left an account of the country which has been translated both into French and English. Abd-el-Latif was a native of Baghdad, a physician, and a man of letters. He devoted himself to the study of the old Greek authors, particularly of Aristotle, and went to Cairo attracted by the fame of three men, of whom only one, Moses Maimonides the Jew, left a lasting reputation behind him. Moses Maimonides was a Spanish Jew of Cordova, who had become a Moslem in Spain, but, it is said, returned again to the religion of his forefathers after he had settled in Fostat. Abd-el-Latif went to see the Pyramids before they were stripped of their casing by the iconoclastic attempts of El Aziz, and declares them to have been covered with inscriptions in

the character of the ancient Egyptians, which no Moslem could read. Abd-el-Latif wrote a description of the plants and animals of Egypt, as well as of the antiquities of the Delta. He mentions that the hippopotamus was still to be found in the Delta, and in particular gives an account of two which did so much damage in the Damietta branch of the river that after the local authorities had tried in vain to destroy them, they sent to Nubia for a band of skilled hippopotamus-hunters to get rid of the beasts for them. The bodies were brought to Cairo, where Abd-el-Latif saw and made careful measurements of them.

Abd-el-Latif is full of admiration of the Egyptian architects and the lofty, well-ventilated palaces which they built for the 'princes' of Egypt; the splendid baths and water conduits, which were so solidly built that they remained where the palace or building was destroyed. Even after centuries of misgovernment and oppression the sanitary arrangements and engineering skill of the Egyptians filled the celebrated physician from Baghdad and Damascus with surprise. But the chief value of Abd-el-Latif's book lies in the account he gives of the famine and consequent pestilence of the years A.H. 597–8 (1200–1 A.D.).

Apparently Boha-ed-din had thought more of building walls with the destroyed antiquities than of cleaning canals, and the usual result followed: a low Nile left the country absolutely unwatered. The wretched people abandoned their desolate fields and crowded into the towns along the river; there were no reserves of money or food to fall back upon, and the poorer classes almost from the beginning had to subsist on the flesh of dogs, of horses, of those men and women who had died before them of starvation. Some of

them went still further and devoured their own children in their extremity; some set up a regular trade in human flesh, decoying women and children with offers of food, murdering them, and exposing the flesh as meat for sale. Abd-el-Latif says that he himself saw the roasted corpses of several children which at different times were recognised and seized by the authorities in their attempts to put an end to the frightful trade. Those who were convicted of having killed and eaten children were burnt alive. In a few days as many as thirty suffered this punishment in Cairo. Page after page of Abd-el-Latif are filled with the ghastly details. In particular, he says that the neighbourhood of the mosque of Ahmed Touloun was infested by these human butchers, who lay in wait for their victims in the narrow alleys and killed great numbers, among whom Abd-el-Latif particularises a fat bookseller. He assures us that the same scenes of horror were enacted at Assuan, at Kous, in the Fayoum, Mohallah-el-Kebir, Alexandria, and Damietta. The bodies of those who died from starvation lay about the streets unburied, or the shrunken flesh was stripped from their bones for food. Many villages were left without a single inhabitant. Some were taken possession of by the rich, who had managed to keep themselves alive and to save seed for sowing the deserted fields, and then they were obliged to hire men to bring out the corpses which lay in all the houses *and throw them into the river*, at the rate of a piece of silver for every ten bodies so disposed of. But in some cases the wolves and hyenas had saved them this expense. A fisherman from Tennis reported that in one day four hundred rotting corpses had floated by him on the river. Thousands sold themselves or their children into slavery for the food necessary to sustain

life. Some men boasted to Abd-el-Latif that they had violated as many as fifty free-born girls, whose misery had rendered them an easy prey. It was reckoned that less than two per cent. of the artisan class survived the famine.

Pestilence, in Egypt the invariable sequence of famine, soon followed, and the population was reduced still further. In one day alone in Alexandria the funeral prayers were said for seven hundred persons, representing a far greater number who were buried without a prayer or left without burial at all. Abd-el-Latif nowhere hints that he felt any obligation to devote his skill and science to the relief of the suffering people, and with a brief sketch of the havoc wrought by the plague his account ends. We learn from other sources that he left the sorely afflicted country and went to live at Damascus.

About this time also there was an outbreak of persecution in Egypt which was specially directed against the Christian sculptors, architects, and masons, whose achievements Abd-el-Latif so much admired. Hundreds of them emigrated in consequence to Abyssinia, where the king received them gladly and employed them in building churches.

In the Northern Delta the horrors of war were added to those of famine, persecution, and pestilence. The Crusaders had already made one or two fruitless attempts to recover Palestine, and either in the autumn of 1203 or the spring of 1204 they invaded Egypt by the Rosetta branch of the Nile and entrenched themselves at Fueh, whence they devastated the country and massacred indiscriminately the Christian and Moslem inhabitants. The Bishop of Fueh, a man named Kilus, managed to escape, but his flock appears to have been scattered or

destroyed. Egypt at the same time was visited by a terrible earthquake, which was felt through Syria and Asia Minor up to the frontiers of Persia.

El Adel was in Syria at the time, but returned with all speed to meet the Franks in Egypt. He did not, however, give battle, but opened negotiations, which ended in a treaty by which he yielded to them Jaffa, Lydda, and Ramleh (in Syria) as the price of their evacuation of Egypt.

Soon after these events an embassy arrived from Abyssinia to the Patriarch John, asking for a new Metropolitan for that country. John was particularly anxious to make a good selection for this important and far-distant post; but the deplorable custom of electing only monks to the highest offices of the Church made it impossible for him to choose any of the clergy well known to him. He therefore set out on a tour of the different Egyptian monasteries, making diligent inquiries in each, and noting the names of those monks who might be selected as candidates. But the Abyssinian ambassadors grew impatient of this long detention, and applied to the Sultan, offering him presents and requesting him to compel John to give them their Metropolitan without further delay.

John then took the bold step of refusing to choose any inexperienced monk. The Bishop of Fueh was without a flock, a man of experience, and, as the Patriarch had every reason to believe, of high character. The proceeding was canonically irregular, translations not being allowed in the Egyptian Church; but no one protested, and Kilus was raised to the rank of Metropolitan with a special ceremony, and departed for his new charge.

He was met with the greatest respect and ceremony

three days' journey from Axum by the king in person, the bishops, many of the clergy, and a numerous body of troops. An umbrella of cloth of gold—the peculiar privilege of the Metropolitan of Abyssinia—was held over his head, and he was conducted in a triumphal procession to the city. One of the Egyptians who went with him has left an account of the scene, and of the splendour and dignity which surrounded the Metropolitan of Abyssinia at all times. For four years John heard the best reports of his government and conduct; at the end of that time Kilus suddenly appeared in Cairo. On being asked why he had deserted his charge, he replied by declaring that his office had been violently taken from him by a bishop who was the brother of the queen, and that he had barely escaped with his life. His story did not entirely satisfy the Patriarch, and he requested Kilus to take up his abode in Cairo while a commissioner was sent to Abyssinia to inquire into the affair. The commissioner was absent a year, and brought back a very different version. It seemed that a golden staff of great value belonging to the cathedral at Axum had been stolen; that Kilus had accused the treasurer of the theft, and, on the bare suspicion, had caused the priest to be seized and scourged to death. This high-handed proceeding had raised a popular riot against him, from which he had fled. The Emperor of Abyssinia sent his own ambassadors with the commissioner to confirm the truth of his story, and to entreat that another Metropolitan might be sent to them. The ambassadors were also charged with handsome presents for the Sultan, since it was well understood by this time that if the Churches of the Soudan and Abyssinia wished to keep up their communications with the Mother Church of

Egypt they must pay heavily for the privilege of doing so. Among other offerings, they brought to the Sultan a lion, an elephant, and a giraffe. El Adel was away fighting the Franks in Syria; but his son and successor, Melek-el-Kamil, received the presents graciously, and gave the necessary permission for the departure of a new Metropolitan.

But John first called a synod to decide what was to be done with Kilus, and he was sentenced to be solemnly and publicly degraded from the episcopal office. A certain day was fixed, and the concourse of both Christians and Moslems to see the unwonted spectacle was so great 'that a saddled ass fetched three drachmæ for the day's hire.' The new Metropolitan was Isaac, a monk from the Laura of St. Anthony, who was received with great honour in Abyssinia, and governed the Church there till he died. The reign of this Emperor of Abyssinia lasted forty years, and he was reverenced as a saint after his death. He caused churches to be carved out of the solid rock in Abyssinia by Egyptian architects, which aroused the astonishment centuries after of the Portuguese.

All this time El Adel was struggling with the Crusaders in Palestine, and Egypt was governed by Melek-el-Kamil, who was very favourable to the Christians. Some who had outwardly apostatised under the oppression of Saleh-ed-din began to hope that they might be permitted to profess their true faith again without incurring the fiery death to which all who relapsed from the Moslem faith were doomed. One man, who from being a monk of Nitria had become a Moslem clerk in a Government office, presented himself before Kamil and entreated his leave to return to the Christian faith, declaring that if it were not granted he

would suffer martyrdom sooner than remain a Moslem. Kamil dismissed the man in safety, and he returned in penitence to his former monastery. Hearing of his success, another Christian from the Thebaid came to the Court with a like request; but by this time El Adel had returned from Syria, and was extremely indignant to hear of his son's clemency. So far from granting the second application, he despatched soldiers to Nitria with orders to put the monk to death at once if he declared himself a Christian. The wretched man not only apostatised a second time, but tried to curry favour by declaring that he would point out to the Government officials where the monks of his monastery had concealed their treasure. In fact, on the approach of the Moslems the sacred vessels of the church had been hidden in a dry well for safety, but no other treasure was possessed by the monastery, as the archimandrite assured the party sent to carry it away. They found the well by the help of the renegade, and took the chalice, paten, and sanctuary veil to Cairo, whence by the intercession of Kamil they were restored to the monks.

Not long after this John died, beloved and lamented by all parties. Burial follows almost immediately upon death in Egypt, and it so happened that none of his own bishops arrived in time to attend the funeral, whereby we conclude that his death was sudden and unexpected. The chief mourner at the funeral of the Egyptian Patriarch was therefore a bishop of the Greek Church in Egypt, which is significant of the high estimation in which he was held even by those who deemed him a heretic. And it was a Moslem historian who wrote of this same Patriarch: 'He put an end to the poll tax' (paid by each member of

the Church to the Patriarch, and originally imposed to meet the demands of the Moslems and the Alexandrians) ' and forbade all fees for ordinations. He was never burdensome to a single Christian, and never took a bribe.'

The Egyptian Church hesitated between two men as John's successor—one named Paul, of whom little more than the name is known ; and the archdeacon of the church of the Moallakah in the fortress of Babylon. But there was a certain man named David ebn Johanna ebn Laklak, a native of the Fayoum, well known among the Copts for his unscrupulous ambition, who had strong interest at Court, and was determined, by fair means or foul, to obtain the Patriarchal throne. He had absolutely no qualification for the post, he had been excommunicated by his bishop on a previous occasion for exciting disturbance in the church, he had presented himself as a candidate for the dignity of Metropolitan of Abyssinia, and had been refused by the late Patriarch with indignation. Had the Egyptian Church been free, his claim would not have troubled their peace for a moment ; but he was the intimate friend of the Secretary of State for War, and that person, who was nominally a Christian, persuaded the Sultan El Adel to issue his mandate for the consecration of David on the following day, which was Sunday. As soon as this became known, the indignation of the Egyptians knew no bounds. A sufficient number of bishops to perform the ceremony were apparently kept in restraint all night, but they managed to send information to the principal Copts, who were not slow to take action. Long before it was light, Kamil, who was then residing in the citadel, was awakened by the clamour of a great multitude calling upon him. He came out with his usual

kindness to receive the petitioners, a vast crowd of Christians carrying lighted torches and imploring his help to prevent the calamity which threatened them. As soon as Kamil understood what had happened and the urgency of the affair, he called for his horse and promised to seek his father the Sultan immediately on their behalf. Meanwhile David, having good reason to fear interruption, had left Cairo at daybreak on the Sunday morning, accompanied by his personal supporters and the bishops who were to perform the ceremony of consecration, on his road to Babylon; for though the city of Babylon was no more, the old cathedral church (the Moallakah) had been saved by its inclusion in the Roman fortress, and the ceremony of consecrating the Patriarch was still performed there. Thus, when Kamil arrived at the palace of his father in Cairo, he found David gone; but, on his urgent representations, the Sultan sent to recall the bishops, without whom the consecration could not proceed, and who had doubtless been looking anxiously for the summons. David's nomination was declared null and void, and the election was put off for a time. Four of the bishops met in the church of St. Sergius and Bacchus in Babylon, and pronounced sentence of excommunication against David. They also bound themselves by an oath never to join in the consecration of David, for it seems to have been clearly understood that no reliance could be placed upon El Adel; and as they were not permitted at once to end the matter by consecrating a Patriarch of their own choice, the way was left open for David's intrigues and his indomitable will to gain their end.

His friend, the Secretary of State for War, soon made another attempt. He assured the Sultan that David was

really approved by the people, and that the demonstration against him was got up by unworthy agitators. In order to prove this, he managed by threats, persuasion, and bribes to obtain the signature of thirteen bishops (among whom we are sorry to find the names of two of those who had sworn never to consecrate him), forty monks, and a large body of priests and laity. The Sultan permitted the arrangements to go on, and David would then have attained his ambition but for the interference of the Sultan's physician (as usual, a Christian), who exposed the means by which the War Secretary had obtained the signatures, and implored the Sultan to allow the election to proceed by the Heikeliet.

The situation ended in a deadlock. The Sultan at Kamil's entreaty refrained from using force to compel the election of his nominee, but neither would he allow any other man to be consecrated, and Egypt remained without a Patriarch.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE CRUSADERS IN EGYPT

1216 ALL this time the wars in Palestine were continuous. The
32 sixth Crusade had begun in 1213 (A.H. 610), and the Saracens
13 were hard pushed to maintain their footing on the coast, where almost all the important towns were in the hands of the Franks. El Adel had gone again to Syria to carry on the war after the incidents mentioned in the last chapter, when the Crusaders turned towards Egypt and laid siege to Damietta. Kamil hastily marched to its relief, sending to his father for succour. El Adel at once set out to join him, but died suddenly before he reached the frontier. His soldiers, who viewed Kamil with dislike as a lover of peace and of the Christians, at once declared that they would not accept him as Sultan, and elected a Kurdish general. If at this juncture the Crusaders had unanimously pushed their advantage, they could have conquered Egypt with ease; but unfortunately they were as much divided among themselves as the Moslems. The Pope's legate, who had recently arrived, insisted that the supreme command should be given to him; whereas John de Brienne, the commander of the Crusading army, was naturally unwilling to yield his post to an ecclesiastic. The Saracens were the first to recover themselves. Kamil's brother, commonly called Khor-ed-din out of his many

names, with a loyalty very unusual among the Moslems, hastened to his assistance from Syria. He suppressed the revolt against Kamil, and joined his forces to those of his brother against the Franks.

The siege had now lasted several months, when the Crusading army was joined by St. Francis of Assisi, travelling with a small band of monks in search of martyrdom. He arrived just as Kamil and his brother were about to make a vigorous attempt to raise the siege, and prophesied that in the forthcoming battle the Christians would be defeated. It fell out as he had said, and six thousand of the Crusading army were slain or taken prisoners; but the siege was not raised. Then St. Francis, taking with him one of his companions, set out alone to visit the Moslem camp. They were seized by the advanced guard, bound, and taken before the Sultan, who demanded why they had come alone to his camp.

St. Francis replied that he came by the authority of the Most High God to show to the Sultan and his people the way of salvation. Probably, like most Europeans—not only of his day, but of ours—he was unaware of the very existence of the Egyptian Church, or of the fact that Kamil was constantly surrounded by and dependent on his Christian subjects. Moreover, if he *had* known, a heretic would be regarded by St. Francis as no better than an infidel.

Kamil, while he smiled at the Saint's ignorance, admired his courage, and invited him to remain as his guest for some days. The fiery monk expressed his willingness to do so on a trifling condition. 'Let a furnace be heated,' he asked, 'and let any of your teachers enter it with me. He whose God protects him in the midst of the

fire shall be acknowledged as the teacher of the true faith.'

The Sultan objected that no Moslem would consent to abide by such a test. Then St. Francis offered, if the Sultan would give him his word as a sovereign that in the case of his surviving the ordeal Kamil and his people would embrace Christianity, to enter the furnace alone. But Kamil, who perhaps feared the 'art magic' of the Franks, and who in any case would not have joined the Latin Church, even had he decided to become a Christian, refused this second offer. He dismissed St. Francis with all honour; attempted to load him with presents, which he refused; and at parting desired him to pray that God would reveal to the Sultan of Egypt whether the Moslem or the Christian faith was more acceptable to Him.

The siege dragged on, and Kamil, finding it impossible to save the town by force of arms, and anxious at any cost to prevent the Franks from obtaining a footing in Egypt, proposed conditions which were most favourable to the Crusaders. He offered to restore to them Jerusalem and all his own possessions in Palestine (Northern Syria belonged to his brother Khor-ed-din); the true Cross, which Saleh-ed-din had promised to restore, and failed; besides a sum of money and all his Christian prisoners. It seems extraordinary that such terms as these should not have been accepted; but the Crusaders argued that it would be comparatively easy for the infidels to retake Jerusalem as soon as the Crusading army was disbanded, and that it was more important for them to make good their footing in Egypt. The terms therefore were rejected, though by a very small majority. A night attack was made very shortly afterwards, and Damietta fell into

the hands of the Crusaders in November of the year 1219 (A.H. 616). Kamil at once broke up his camp and marched southwards to protect his capital.

Damietta was little more than a city of the dead when it was entered by the Crusaders, and fear of pestilence prevented for some time the solemn ceremonies with which the Latin Church proposed to take possession. As usual, they ignored or persecuted the National Church and the native Christians. A Metropolitan see under Rome was established in the city, the principal mosque was converted into a Latin Church, and not even the rights of Nicholas, the Patriarch of the Greek Church in Egypt, were respected. Renaudot gives a list of fourteen titular Latin Patriarchs of Alexandria dating from this act of schism, of whom only the first two appear to have ever been in Egypt.

Unfortunately there was no Patriarch of the Egyptian Church to remonstrate against these schismatical proceedings, but Nicholas wrote to Pope Innocent, ostensibly to entreat his interference on behalf of the Christian captives in Cairo and Alexandria. He also reported that among the captives was a deacon of the Latin Church, who sought priestly orders from himself in order that he might be able to minister to his fellow-prisoners, but he (Nicholas) could not think of conferring orders on a member of another Church without the express sanction of the applicant's Spiritual Father. The Pope either could or would not see the implied reproach in the courteous letter of Nicholas, and merely commended him for his filial devotion to Rome!

Among the besiegers was the Bishop of Acre, and when the inhabitants of Damietta were sold as slaves he bought

up all the babies he could get, in order to baptize them. The need for mothers does not appear to have been considered by him, and five hundred of the poor little things died soon after their baptism—in many cases, no doubt, their second baptism, since it is not recorded that the good bishop troubled himself to inquire whether the parents were Moslem or Christian. Some of the babies survived and were brought up by friends of the bishop.

Meanwhile the Crusading army, leaving their *impedimenta* with a garrison in Damietta, marched to overtake the Sultan. They came up with him at Mansoura,[1] where a disastrous engagement took place, concerning which each side claimed the victory. Both were evidently too severely crippled to be available for immediate movement, and negotiations began between the two camps, while the Sultan sent to Syria for help and to Cairo with instructions to put the city in a state of defence and prepare for the worst.

This was a difficult matter, since the city had been almost drained of fighting men already. Money could always be obtained, however, by the simple expedient of taking it from the industrious Christians, and on this occasion the Melkite Church fared as badly as the Monophysite, since it was known that Nicholas had been corresponding with the Pope, and was apparently quite ready to transfer the allegiance which he owed to Constantinople to the Spiritual Father of the West. The authorities began by confiscating half the money which the late National Patriarch had left to his sister, and they

[1] Or some village near the present Mansoura, which did not then exist in all probability. It is said to have been built by Kamil after Damietta had fallen into the hands of the Christians.

again tried to induce the Egyptians to consecrate David, since not only did the election of a Patriarch mean heavy fees to the Moslem authorities, but they had good reason to expect a large sum of money from David when the object of his ambition was attained. But priests and bishops poured into Cairo from all parts of the country to protest, and David, who had called a meeting at the Court in favour of his candidature, saw his hopes once more defeated in the uproar and tumult which followed. He seems to have conceived the idea of taking the Patriarchal power by force, without the ceremony of consecration, which he could not obtain; and went solemnly in state as Patriarch, attended by his followers, to celebrate the Liturgy in the church of St. Sergius and Bacchus in the fortress of Babylon. The Egyptians swarmed into the church with loud outcries; but David had apparently a strong guard with him, and finished the office, in spite of the tumultuous protests which rendered it inaudible. His action still further increased the troubles of the Church, and the fall of Damietta brought actual persecution upon the Christians. The priests who had poured into Cairo to protest against the consecration of David were retained by the Moslem authorities and set to forced labour at the works hastily raised for the defence of the city; they were told that they should all be sent to the Moslem camp, where they would be at once put to death by the infuriated soldiery; and finally an enormous sum of money was levied upon them. The Melkite priests were also put to forced labour and heavily taxed. Indeed, the native Christians all over the Delta felt themselves 'between the hammer and the anvil.' They had learned by this time that they had nothing to hope for from the Crusaders, who regarded

heretics as no better than infidels, and treated them all alike; while the invasion of the Latin Christians had roused all the Moslem fanaticism from which the Egyptian Christians suffered. The army which had marched to the relief of Damietta had destroyed in revenge every church by which they passed; even the church of St. Mark in the suburbs of Alexandria was levelled to the ground, in case the Crusading army should occupy it as a point from which to attack Alexandria.

Kamil, however, was about to reap the benefit of the high character and wise policy which had won him the loyalty even of his own family and the respect of the Egyptian Church. His brothers and cousins thronged from Syria to his relief, and his army was soon in a far superior condition to that of the Crusaders. Moreover, he had carefully calculated his camping ground, so as to be well out of reach of floods, while the Crusaders had chosen the low ground near the river. When the Nile rose, the Sultan despatched a body of men by night to cut the banks of a canal, which flooded the Latin camp with water, and they woke to find themselves in the midst of a lake and cut off from all their stores.

Helpless and suffering from famine, they had soon no choice but to come to terms with the Sultan. There was no talk now of receiving Jerusalem and Southern Palestine; they were forced to be grateful for the permission to retire in safety from the country, and give up Damietta, which it had cost them nearly a year and a half to win.

The defeat of the Crusaders, though hardly regarded as an evil by the National Church, who believed that the Latins would prove no better masters than the Moslems, was a terrible blow to the hopes of the Greek Church in Egypt.

Nicholas wrote a very curious letter to Pope Honorius of Rome after the surrender of Damietta, in which he ignores the National Church altogether, and speaks as if all the Christian inhabitants of the country were ready to become with himself the dutiful subjects of the Pope.

The following is a translation of the letter in full, taken from Neale:—

To the Most Reverend Father and Lord, by divine grace Chief Pontiff of the Holy Roman Church and Universal Bishop, Nicholas, by the same grace humble Patriarch of the Alexandrian see, reverence, prompt as due.

The archbishops, bishops, presbyters, clerks, and laics, and all the Christians which are in the land of Egypt, supplicate your paternity and sanctity with groans and cries. If any Christian church from any accident happens to fall, we dare not rebuild it; and for these fourteen years past each Christian in Egypt is compelled to pay a tax of one bezant and fourteen karabbas; and if he be poor, he is committed to prison and not set at liberty until he have paid the whole sum. There are so many Christians in this country that the Sultan derives from them a yearly revenue of one hundred thousand golden bezants. What further shall I say when Christians are employed for every unfit and sordid work, and are even compelled to clean the streets of the city? It is well known throughout the whole of Christendom how shamefully Damietta hath been lost, and it is unsafe to trust that to letters which to speak by word of mouth is most painful. Have pity therefore on us, our Lord and Spiritual Father! As the Saints, before the Advent of Christ, longed for their redemption and liberation by their Saviour, so we your children expect the coming of the Emperor; and not only we, but also more than ten thousand exiles dispersed through the land of the Saracens. I must not omit, but rather press, what it will be the duty of our lord and Emperor to do on his arrival. This is the way of

salvation and health, and which will be free, by God's grace, from danger : let the ships and galleys, whatever their number may be, sail up the river Rasceti [1] and as far as the town which is situated in an island of that stream, called Fueh ; and thus, by God's mercy, they will secure without loss the whole land of Egypt. The river is deep and broad, the island abounds with all necessaries, as the bearer of these presents, one in whom we have confidence, will be able to certify. We know him to be prudent and discreet, and have on that account sent him to you. Nor must I omit one of the greatest misfortunes which have befallen the Christians in Egypt : in consequence of the capture of Damietta one hundred and fifteen churches have been destroyed.

It is not to be wondered at that Kamil grew doubly suspicious of the Greek Church, while he resumed his policy of tolerance and justice toward the National Church. The Melkites were not permitted to restore the lately destroyed churches belonging to their communion, and were compelled to submit to many of the humiliating restrictions formerly applied to all Christians ; while the Monophysites were allowed to rebuild their churches and follow their own habits of life. Indeed, on one occasion, when one of his Emirs had, without any form of trial, seized some monks accused of not paying their taxes and extracted from them by torture the sum of 400 pieces of gold—being all that the monastery possessed—Kamil listened to the remonstrances of a deputation from the monastery, inquired into the matter, and commanded the money to be restored to them. He refused also all the bribes which were offered him to enforce the consecration of the unworthy David. The monks were again exempted

[1] That is, enter the country by the Rosetta branch of the river, instead of again attempting Damietta.

from tribute, and on one occasion Kamil himself paid a visit to the still famous monastic settlement of Nitria. He was entertained at the monastery of St. Macarius, and as a further mark of favour he removed a Mohammedan official who had hitherto quartered himself on the monastery. The monks earnestly urged upon him the crying need of a Patriarch, declaring that of eighty priests who had formerly been under the monastery only four remained; for though there were still bishops in the land, these monastic Christians preferred apparently to leave the parishes dependent on them without pastors sooner than abandon their privilege of receiving ordination from the Patriarch alone.

The Sultan assured them that he was not to blame for the unhappy state of affairs, and that when the whole Church was unanimous in their choice of a Patriarch he would gladly give his consent, and would even forego the usual backsheesh on the elevation of a new Patriarch.

It is probable that Kamil, who had shown himself the kindest master that the Egyptians had known for many centuries, was really in earnest at the time, and a terrible responsibility rests on the ambitious and unprincipled man who for his own selfish ends ruined the cause of Christianity and patriotism in Egypt. Bishopric after bishopric fell vacant, and David only rejoiced because the number of his opponents grew less. A man like the late John or fifty others of her already long line of Patriarchs would have used this time of unwonted peace and prosperity to build up and reform the Church of Egypt; even, it is possible, to win over Kamil himself to the faith which evidently had great attractions for him. But it is hardly wonderful that as time went on the Sultan, who saw most of David and

his venal following, should have lost all patience with the Christians and all faith in their love for their religion. He found out after a time that his generosity in exempting the monks from tribute had been grossly abused. Hundreds wore the dress who had neither taken nor practised the monastic obligations, merely in order to escape the Government tax on Christians. With justifiable indignation Kamil ordered a searching inquiry to be made, and his officials immediately seized the excuse for extortion from all 'monks' without inquiry. It is recorded that the true monks, no less than the false, suffered very severely. On the whole, the thirty years which cover the reign of Kamil and his two successors are the most melancholy and disgraceful in the record of the Egyptian Church.

Though we can perfectly understand Kamil's change of policy towards the Christians, it is not so easy to explain his sudden change for the worse at this time towards those of his own faith and family. For eighteen years the Sultan and his brothers in Syria had shown a most rare example in any age amongst ruling Oriental families, of good feeling and loyalty. Kamil's brothers had hastened to his defence more than once against their common enemy the Franks, and that without demanding reward or compensation. Nor can we discover any ground of offence, pretended or otherwise, against the Sultan of Damascus, the very brother to whom Kamil owed most, and against whom he declared war about the year 1235. He even sent money to the Crusading Emperor Frederick, and made an alliance with him to seize and share the kingdom of Damascus. Moreover, needing money, he did what he had sworn not to do—he gave his consent to the forcible consecration of David by such few bishops as remained and were not

inclined to risk martyrdom for a refusal. Thus after twenty years of intrigue David's iron will triumphed, and he was given the Church of his fathers for a prey.

So sudden and complete a change in the Sultan, without any apparent reason, may perhaps be explained by the conjecture that he was already suffering from the malady which put an end to his life about a year afterwards and had fallen under some strong influence for evil. This may have been that of his second son ; but nothing is known for certain, except the fact that in concert with Frederick he attacked the dominions of his brother, that his brother died immediately afterwards, and that Kamil allied himself with another of his brothers from Mesopotamia to despoil his young nephew of his inheritance. But in 1237 both brothers died, shortly after one another ; and the Sultan Kamil was succeeded in Egypt by his eldest son, who among his many names is known as Melek-el-Adel.

CHAPTER XXV

AN INFAMOUS PATRIARCH

1237 WHILE the Sultan Kamil departed to wage war against
43 his unoffending brother in Syria, David was left to
34 tyrannise unchecked over the unfortunate Christians. He had begun by assuming the honoured name of Cyril, but resembled Cyril the Great in nothing save his indomitable will. He was enthroned with the greatest pomp and splendour, which deeply offended the Moslems; but in his first ordinations of priests and deacons he conciliated popular opinion among the Christians by abstaining from the demand for fees. Nearly all the bishoprics were vacant, however, and in dealing with these he exceeded all bounds. In a short time he had sold forty bishoprics, thus raising an enormous sum of money and surrounding himself at the same time with an effective force of his own creatures. The nobles of the community remonstrated in vain, and one monk named Peter solemnly renounced his communion and headed a schism from the National Church. To all remonstrances Cyril replied that he was compelled to raise money to satisfy the promises he had made to the Moslem Government. He gave this excuse at a meeting of the better ecclesiastics and laymen held, in the same year that the Sultan died, in the cathedral church of the Moallakah; but swore that now these demands

were complied with he would in future abstain from simony.

His next proceeding, if not simoniacal, was a flagrant act of tyranny, which gratified at once his greed of gold and of power. Some of the monasteries in Egypt, like the celebrated one of Macarius in Nitria, had always been Patriarchal—that is, directly under the spiritual authority of the Patriarch, who fulfilled for them all the functions requiring a bishop, exercised certain rights, and received a certain share of the revenues. Many, however, were in the same way subject to the bishop of the diocese in which they were situated. Cyril by an arbitrary edict declared that *all* the monasteries of Egypt were henceforth Patriarchal, by which means he increased both his income and his rights of personal jurisdiction enormously. In the same way he annexed the episcopal income and jurisdiction belonging to several of the parish churches.

Not content with invading the rights of his own bishops, he proceeded to infringe those of the Patriarch of Antioch. His great aim seems to have been to change the 'constitutional monarchy' of the Egyptian Patriarch into an irresponsible tyranny, like that of the mediæval Pope of Rome. On the pretext that there were many Egyptians resident in Syria who could not understand the language of the Monophysite Bishop of Jerusalem (under Antioch), he proceeded to ordain a Metropolitan for Syria under himself, who went to reside at Jerusalem. The Egyptian bishops and clergy strongly remonstrated with their Patriarch on this act of schism, but only succeeded in getting him to send an embassy to the Patriarch of Antioch, who was then at Jerusalem, to ask his recognition of the intruding bishop. This was courteously but firmly

refused by Ignatius of Antioch. Cyril persisted. Ignatius lost his temper and excommunicated the intruder, who appealed to the Latin ecclesiastics of the city. These, aware that their own appointment lay open to the same charge of schism, defended the Egyptian, and gave him their protection. Ignatius proceeded to return evil for evil. He ordained a Metropolitan for Abyssinia, which was clearly under the jurisdiction of the Egyptian Church ; but it is not stated whether the man whom he ordained, and who was an Ethiopian by birth, ever attempted to enforce his pretended claims in Abyssinia.

Cyril's proceedings, however, marked him out as fair game to the Sultan Kamil in the changed attitude of the latter. He arrested the Patriarch on some frivolous charge, and Cyril had to pay 1,500 pieces of his ill-gotten gold before he was liberated. Almost immediately after this Kamil died, and Cyril, it must be feared by systematic bribery, succeeded in securing the favour and protection both of the son Adel, who first succeeded him, and the son who two years afterwards usurped his brother's throne.

For nearly eight years Cyril, by favour of the Moslems, tyrannised over the Egyptian Church in defiance both of the lay nobles of her communion and of the bishops, who, though most of them owed their position to Cyril's rascality, made constant efforts to restrain him and avert the ruin of their Church. Cyril was so unpopular at Cairo that, instead of living in the cathedral fortress of Babylon, he had fixed his residence at Alexandria; but was constrained at length to come down and meet his bishops in the house of the Governor of Cairo, who was a friend of Cyril's, and doubtless saw the way to make money out of both sides. For the bishops had begun to talk openly

of deposing their Patriarch, and this startled Cyril, who knew that, though there was no precedent in the whole history of the Patriarchate for such a course, his bishops might, if pressed too far, take the law in their own hands and create one.

The demands of the bench were not, in truth, unreasonable. The first, that the practice of 'simony' should be renounced, came perhaps with a bad grace from a bench which owed its elevation, almost without exception, to the most barefaced simony. The other demands were—that the rights of the Patriarch of Antioch should be respected; that the jurisdiction of the newly made Metropolitan in Syria should extend no farther than Gaza; that some ecclesiastics whom Cyril had ordained in spite of their canonical incapacity should be deposed; that the Patriarch 'should not affect to imitate the innovations of the Melkites';[1] and that one of the senior bishops should be appointed secretary, as a check upon the Patriarch.

Cyril listened to these demands, but refused to give any reply, and rejected their earnest requests for a formal synod. He employed his time in bribing the Moslem authorities, and by this means obtained the imprisonment of the leader of the movement for reform, a monk named Hamid, and his own dismissal in safety. The scandal of Cyril's conduct, however, grew worse and worse; till fourteen of the bishops came up in a body to remonstrate in 1239, and after some time succeeded in inducing Cyril to call a synod in the Moallakah at Babylon. A series of resolutions were drawn up with great care concerning the reform of the Church, and these were presented to Cyril for

[1] This appears to refer to the fact that he had restored the practice of auricular confession in the Egyptian Church.

his signature in the form of a lengthy document, to which was prefixed the Monophysite profession of faith. Neale gives an abstract of this document, which is here inserted:—

None should henceforth be ordained bishop who was not qualified for that dignity by his learning, by the consent of the people, and by a regular 'psephisma';[1] that the consecrations of bishops and the ordinations of priests should be performed gratis, and that ecclesiastical judges should be forbidden under any pretext whatever to receive presents, the whole under pain of excommunication; that the Patriarch, assisted by a council of the most experienced bishops, should draw up a compendium of the Canons, particularly with respect to the sacraments and matrimonial and testamentary causes; that copies of the document should be distributed throughout Egypt, and that all future ecclesiastical cases should be determined according to it; that a General Synod should be held annually in the third week after Pentecost; that the traditions of the Coptic Church should be preserved; that circumcision, except in case of necessity, should take place before baptism; that none who had been a slave should be raised to the priesthood, except in Ethiopia and Nubia, where this rule might be relaxed in favour of otherwise deserving candidates; that the sons of uncrowned mothers should, both themselves and their posterity, be incapable of ecclesiastical promotion; that the Metropolitan of Damietta should retain that dignity; that neither the Patriarch nor any of the prelates should presume to hold an ordination beyond the limits of their respective dioceses; that the Patriarch should not presume to excommunicate any of the faithful in another diocese till after due monition given to its bishop that he should himself perform the excommunication, and, if the prelate refused, the Patriarch might then act on his own authority; that the same rule should hold with

[1] A *ψήφισμα* at Athens was a proposition passed by a majority of votes, opposed to a *προβούλευμα* (decree of the Senate) and to a *νόμος* (fundamental law of the state).

regard to absolution; that the lately created Patriarchal churches should return to obedience of their diocesan bishop; that the tribute paid by the monasteries to the Patriarch should not be exacted unjustly nor tyrannically; that the Patriarch should not compel a bishop to ordain any unwilling candidate; that the Patriarch should not claim a right over the offerings made in the various churches of his diocese on festivals, unless the bishop of the diocese had consented before his consecration to commute for these the ordinary pension paid to the see of Alexandria; that the accusations of monks against each other should not be rashly received, and that in settling these differences laics should not be employed as judges; that no bishop should be excommunicated for a trifling cause, nor without three admonitions from the Patriarch, two by letter and one by word of mouth; that an Hegumen (or head of a monastery) should be considered as of the same rank as a Protopope, and should therefore pronounce the absolution when a priest of lesser rank was celebrating, and receive the communion immediately after the celebrant. Finally, that none of the faithful should incur excommunication by attending on a festival the divine office in a church out of his own diocese.

Cyril did all he could to escape signing this document, but the bishops were firm, and flatly told him that, unless he did so, they would one and all break off communion with him. Thus constrained, he signed; and the compendium of the Canons which they had insisted on was drawn up, signed, and distributed to the different dioceses as agreed. It contained nineteen sections in five chapters. One section is devoted to baptism, seven to marriage, one to wills and bequests, eight to the laws of inheritance, and two to the priesthood.[1]

[1] The man who drew up this compendium of the Canons was Safi-el-Fedail, commonly known as Ebn Assal, a distinguished theologian of the National Church.

Shortly after this synod the young Sultan of Egypt was deposed by his brother Melek-el-Saleh, and the revolution was attended with the usual licence and anarchy, in which the Christians suffered most. Cyril managed, however, to secure the favour of the usurper, and, breaking all the oaths that he had sworn, he continued his scandalous practices unchecked. Not only insatiable greed both of money and power characterised all his actions, but an excessive cruelty, and the Government authorities endeavoured to bring him to trial themselves in a regular manner, but no two bishops could be got to witness against him in a Moslem court, or to acknowledge any jurisdiction on the part of the Moslem where they or their Patriarch were concerned. They called another meeting among themselves, however, with the lay nobles of the Church, and again entreated Cyril to observe the laws of the Church and to promise reformation. Cyril answered them with biting scorn, and in truth the position of all those who had bought their preferment from him was almost intolerable. For very shame they could not pursue the matter further; but one of the lay members of the Church stuck to his ground, and eventually constrained Cyril to sign another paper. In this he appointed a faithful priest to administer the revenues of the Church (which he had systematically appropriated to his private use) according to a plan laid down. He promised to consecrate (without fees) new bishops for two sees which he had kept vacant in order to pocket the revenues and keep the jurisdiction in his own hands; to appoint two schoolmasters at Babylon and Cairo; and to permit the monasteries to remain under their own episcopal authority. But when this paper was submitted

to the Council it was rejected as insufficient, and the meeting broke up without any definite result.

In 1240 one of Cyril's own followers, disgusted with his avarice, betrayed him to the Emir of Cairo, who threw him into prison, and again endeavoured to make his bishops give evidence against him. This they still refused to do, but in a private consultation with the Emir—the Sultan Melek-el-Saleh was away fighting in Syria—nine of them admitted that all the charges against their Patriarch were true. At the same time they offered Cyril to forgive and forget, if he would sign a document which was very similar to the one he had signed the year before. Cyril signed, obtained his release, and continued to act precisely in the same manner as before. In 1241 the bishops made an endeavour to depose him, and informed the Emir of their purpose. The Emir, who seems to have been wonderfully favourable to the Christians, asked if it could be done according to their law. They were compelled to confess that the Patriarch could not legally be deposed, except with his own assent, since no synod called without him would have the necessary authority. In a similar case the Pope of Rome has been known to subscribe sentence against himself; but this, of course, Cyril would never have done. He was heavily fined again by the Government, but continued his evil practices for more than a year longer. No one but his own creatures would communicate with him, and when he died, in the February of the year 1243, there was but one feeling among the Egyptians—of relief and thankfulness.

It is difficult to estimate the harm done to the Egyptian Church by this man, whether as David, during the twenty years when his intrigues and bribes kept the

Church without a Patriarch ; or as Cyril, during the eight years when he robbed her with both hands, and brought her to the lowest pitch of shame and humiliation in the eyes of the Moslems. The bishops were struggling with him at Cairo most of the time, to the neglect and scandal of their different dioceses. The name of the Patriarch, which had been to all true Egyptians a rallying-point for honour, every sentiment of patriotism, and reverence—and, whatever their faults, the line of Egyptian Patriarchs will compare favourably with any line of kings or bishops—became a by-word among them for dishonesty and degradation. No Patriarch since the days of Benjamin had so fair an opportunity to serve the Church of Christ as the successor of the saintly John VI., under a Sultan like Kamil. And no Patriarch of Egypt, since the days of St. Mark until now, has so persistently, so shamelessly disregarded every obligation of his high office, or done more to bring the Church into disrepute and degradation. In the extremest persecution it was never known that a bishop of the Church of Egypt had apostatised to the faith of Mohammed. But the Patriarchate of Cyril III. is marked by this disgrace also—that in a time when the Christians were protected and permitted to live their lives in peace the Bishop of Sandafa renounced the faith of his fathers and became a Mohammedan.

Cyril left the Church in such a state of anarchy that no attempt was made for some time to elect another Patriarch. For seven years the bishops managed the affairs of the Church each in his own diocese. It is possible that the laity and the best of the ecclesiastics desired to wait for the death of one or two of the worst of

Cyril's creatures, in order to make sure of being able to elect a good man. During most of this time Egypt was at peace, and the following extract from Ibn Said,[1] who travelled in Egypt between 1240–49, will form a pleasant interlude between the records of strife and war.

Ibn Said says:

Now when I was staying in El-Kâhira, I had a great desire to see El-Fustât. So a kind friend accompanied me. And I saw at Bâb Zawîla an immense quantity of donkeys for the use of those going to El-Fustât, such a number as I never saw before. So my guide mounted one of them, and signed to me to mount another. Now I was ashamed to do this, according to the custom I had inherited in the Maghrib: so he informed me that it was not considered shameful for the notables of Egypt. And I saw the Fukaha riding them, and also persons with fine clothing, and persons of high position: so I mounted; and when I rode gently the donkey-boy made a sign to the donkey, and away he flew with me, and raised such a black dust as blinded me, and soiled my clothes, and I had a dreadful experience. And from my ignorance of how to ride the donkey, and the pace at which he ran, after a method I had never before witnessed, and the unmercifulness of the donkey-boy, I stopped in that thick dense cloud of dust, and said:

In Misr I foregathered with bitter misfortune:
I rode on a donkey, the dust in my eyes:
Behind me a donkey-boy swifter than tempest,
Who knew of no mercy, nor heeded my cries.
I asked him for quarter,—he heeded no jot,
Till I fell on my knees in precipitate wise:
All above me the dust formed a cloister to shade me,
And curtained the daylight away from my eyes.

So I paid the donkey-boy his fare, and said to him: 'All I ask of you is to let me walk on my own two legs.' So I

[1] This translation of Ibn Said is taken from the writings of Corbet Bey.

walked, and reached the city ; and I calculated the distance between El-Kâhira and El-Fustât, and found it to be about two miles. And when I approached El-Fustât all gladness left me. I observed blackened walls in bad repair, and dusty spaces. And I entered the gate, which was ajar, and led to a scene of ruin with ill-placed buildings and crooked thoroughfares built of blackish brick and reeds and palmwood, storey above storey ; and round about the doors such a quantity of black dust and refuse as to horrify a cleanly man and close the eye of a nice one. So I went on, and walked in the narrow markets, where my sufferings from the crush of the people with their wares, and waterskins carried on camels, were such as can only be done justice to by witnessing and undergoing them ; until at last I arrived at the mosque. And I observed in the matter of the narrowness of the streets which surround it, the contrary of what I have mentioned in the case of the mosque of Ishbîliya [in Spain] and the mosque of Marâkish [Morocco]. Then I entered, and saw a great mosque,[1] of ancient structure, without decoration, or any pomp in the mats which ran round part of the walls and were spread on the floor. And I observed that the people, men and women alike, made a passage of it, treading it under foot, and passing through it from door to door to make a short cut : and the hawkers were selling in it all sorts of kernel-fruit, and biscuits, and such like, and the people ate of them in many parts of the mosque, neglecting the reverence due to the place, according to the custom holding amongst them in such matters. And a number of children were going about with vessels of water to those who ate, and made a living out of what they got from them : and the remains of their food lay about the court and corners of the mosque ; and roof and corners and walls were covered with cobwebs ; and the children played about the court : and the walls were written upon with charcoal and red paint in various ugly scrawls written by the common people. Nevertheless, in spite of all

[1] The mosque of Amr ebn Aas.

this, this mosque has a certain grandeur and magnificence of effect upon the feelings, which you do not experience in the mosque of Ishbîlîya, in spite of all its decorative display, and the garden in its midst. And I observed that I experienced in it a soft and soothing influence, without there being anything to look upon which was sufficient to account for it. Then I learned that this is a secret influence left there from the fact that the companions of the Prophet (may God accept them !) stood in its court whilst it was building. And I was pleased with what I observed in it of the circles of students sitting round those appointed to lecture in the Kurân and theology and syntax in various parts : and I enquired about the sources of their livelihood, and was told that it came from the legal alms and suchlike : I was also told that it was very difficult to collect it, except by means of influence and great trouble. After this we left the mosque, and passed on to the shores of the Nile. And I saw a quay with dirty, dusty soil, neither clean nor extensive nor straight in its length, and without any white wall along it ; but nevertheless much frequented by the ships and vessels of all sorts which arrive from all the lands of the earth. And as for the Nile, verily, if I say that I never saw on any river what I saw upon that bank, I say naught but the truth. And the Nile is at that point narrow, because in the midst of the water is the island [1] upon which the present Sultan of all the lands of Egypt [2] has built his citadel, nearer to the side of El-Fustât : and the beauty of its lofty stuccoed walls lends a charm to the view from the shore. Ibn Haukal mentions the bridge which reaches from El-Fustât to the island ; it is not very long : and from the other side of the island to the western bank, known as the Giza bank, is another bridge. But the people cross the river, both themselves and their beasts, mostly in boats, for these two bridges are held in reverence because they come in front of the Citadel of the Sultan, and no one

[1] The island of Rhoda.

[2] Melek-el-Saleh, younger son of Sultan Kamil.

passes on horseback over the bridge between the island and El-Fustât, out of respect to the abode of the Sultan. And we passed that night in a high-placed chamber built out on the roof of a house by the side of the Nile.

I never tasted water sweeter than the Nile water : and I never saw people more polite than the people of El-Fustât ; they are even more so than the people of El-Kâhira, which is about two miles off. And in a word, the people of El-Fustât reach the extreme of politeness and softness in their address, and underneath this surface an extent of flattery and carelessness of the observance of the claims of old friendship and length of social intercourse, which would be long to relate. As for the merchandise from the sea of Alexandria and the sea of the Hejâz [*i.e.* the Mediterranean and Red Seas] which comes to El-Fustât, it is beyond description : for it is here that it is collected, not at El-Kâhira, and from here it is forwarded to all parts of the country. And it is in El-Fustât that we find the sugar and soap factories, and most other suchlike establishments : for El-Kâhira was built for the especial use of the soldiery : and in like manner all the accoutrements of the soldiers are finer in El-Kâhira than in El-Fustât, as also the work of the weaver and the goldsmith and all manufactures of royal magnificence. And in El-Fustât the state of ruin is widespread : while El-Kâhira is in better repair and more populous and crowded, on account of the Sultan's having changed his residence to it, and because the troops live in it. Still, at the present day [*i.e.* about 1245 A.D.] the spirit of repair and growth has breathed upon El-Fustât, on account of its closeness to El-Gazîra As-Sâlihîya [*i.e.* Rhoda], and many troops have been transferred to it, to be close to their duty, and a number of them have built along the walls pleasure houses which are a delight to look upon.

CHAPTER XXVI

ST. LOUIS IN EGYPT

A.D. 1245
A.M. 961
A.H. 643

In 1245 a new Crusade was proclaimed in Europe, and the Egyptian Sultan—or the Sultan of Babylon, as, notwithstanding the destruction of that city, he was still called by the Crusaders—left Egypt in 1248 to fight against an allied army of Franks and Saracens, apparently in the expectation that the new Crusading army would land in Syria.

King Louis of France, however, had intended from the first to begin by attacking Egypt, and in 1249 he landed his army on the shore near Damietta. A large force of the Moslem troops were at Damietta at the time, but they made no attempt to oppose the landing of the Franks, for news had just arrived that Melek-el-Saleh had been brought back from Syria in a dying condition, and, as usual, the mercenary troops were more concerned with the question of his successor than with the defence of a country to which few of them belonged. They abandoned Damietta without striking a blow; and all the stores, treasure, and munitions of war which Melek-el-Saleh had sent to Damietta in expectation of a long siege fell into the hands of the French on June 29, 1249. This loss accelerated the event for which the Saracens were looking; the rage of the Sultan increased his fever, and he died

early in November at Mansoura. As usual, the Crusaders lost their advantage by remaining in Damietta during these four months, while they quarrelled over the division of the spoil and indulged in the wildest debauchery. The good king was powerless apparently to restrain his followers, and occupied his time in pilgrimages to the churches and in perpetuating the schism of which the Latin Church had been guilty in 1219, thirty years before, by appointing a new Latin Patriarch of Damietta. Nicholas, the Patriarch of the Greek Church in Egypt, had died in the same year as the infamous Cyril; and though he had nominally been succeeded by a man named Gregory we know nothing of the latter beyond his name, and no protest of his is recorded against the proceedings of the Crusaders.

In November the Count of Poitiers, who was brother to the King of France, joined the Crusading camp, and a council was called to decide whether they should march to attack Alexandria or Babylon (Cairo). He gave his vote for Cairo, and the march began; but from the first they were harassed by the Saracens, who were now headed by a woman named Shajar-el-dur. This woman, an Armenian by birth, had been the favourite slave of the late Sultan and mother of his only son, Ghayath-el-Din Touran Shah. She had concealed the Sultan's death, and was giving orders in his name in order to secure the throne for her son, who was still in Syria. In this she was entirely successful. While the French waited idly in Damietta, and the Mameluke army waited restlessly for the death of the Sultan to choose their new leader, this woman, with the aid of the chief eunuch and the Emir Fakhr-ed-din, issued her orders, strengthened her defences, and waited

for her son.[1] It is said that Shajar-el-dur had in the same unacknowledged way governed Egypt for some years while her husband and son were fighting in Syria.

Learning wisdom by failure, the Franks advanced more cautiously, and in February, 1250, they surprised the Moslems near Mansoura and massacred a great number of them. But the Mamleluke regiments rushed to their assistance, and the Crusaders were beaten back. Constant skirmishes took place between the two armies, but no real advantage was gained on either side till the arrival of the young prince Touran Shah, when a battle was fought, in which the Crusaders were defeated with great loss.

The condition of the latter was indeed desperate, and a terrible account of their sufferings is given by the Sieur de Joinville. They had sent to Damietta for stores, but none came, and at length they discovered that the 'Saracens' had drawn their boats on to the land, conveyed them secretly across the country, launched them again between Damietta and Mansoura, and totally destroyed the convoy which was coming to the king's relief. On hearing this the King of France gave orders for a retreat to Damietta, and sent to arrange a truce with the Saracens, who nevertheless fell upon them as soon as the retreat had begun and slew many thousands, so that the river was almost choked with the corpses. The king and all his nobles were made prisoners, and hundreds were slain without further trial than the simple question whether or no they would renounce their faith. On their denial they suffered instant martyrdom by beheading. Makrizi declares that in this manner perished one hundred thousand of the French. The king

[1] Makrizi says that Touran Shah was not really her son, but the son of one of the Sultan's wives.

and his nobles were also threatened with torture and death because they refused to swear to conditions of liberty which they knew they could not honestly fulfil; but, finding that threats were useless, the Saracens gave up these conditions, and consented to make it a matter of ransom. The Queen of France was in Damietta, where she was delivered of a son only a day or two after she had heard of her husband's captivity, and King Louis agreed to send to her for the money. The Sultan demanded the enormous sum of a million bezants (about 500,000 louis d'or) for the nobles and the army, and Damietta for the person of Louis himself. The King of France agreed at once to these terms, and this so much astonished the young Sultan, who had expected the long haggling indispensable from every bargain in the East, that, not to be outdone in generosity, he immediately took off 100,000 of the sum, which was fixed at 400,000, and the further condition was agreed to on either side that all the prisoners should be exchanged. The day for the king's departure was fixed, and peace seemed thoroughly established between the two armies, when one of the military revolutions to which all the Moslem kingdoms have been so constantly subject changed the condition of affairs. No one, as usual, was ever able to say precisely how it began. But the Mameluke regiments who composed the greater party of the Egyptian army had never cordially accepted the son of their late master. Empire, according to their ideas, should fall to the strongest. The right of inheritance could have no meaning for these European slaves, ignorant of their own parentage and knowing no home or country but their regiment. Only the strong wise head of the woman Shajar-el-dur had

prevented open mutiny from breaking out before Touran Shah's arrival, and since he had taken the power into his own hands the discontent of the Mameluke Emirs could no longer be restrained. Some say there was a quarrel about the division of the money to be received from the Franks; but the account of the final scene in the life of the last descendant of Saleh-ed-din was written by an eye-witness, the Sieur de Joinville.

After describing the large pavilion which had been erected for the Sultan on the banks of the river, with its three towers of wood covered with cloth from which Touran Shah could survey the whole country, and speaking of the sounds of tumult which arose from the tent where the Sultan was entertaining his principal Emirs, the Frenchman describes the murder:—

The Sultan, who was young and active, fled to the tower he had built, with three of his imans who sat at meat with him; and this tower was behind his chamber, as you have already heard. Those of the Halca, who were 500 mounted men, levelled the Sultan's tents, and surrounded the tower to which he had fled with the three imans, and called to him to come down. Then he said he would do so, provided they spared his life. They replied that they would force him to come down, and that he was not in Damietta. So they discharged Greek fire, which caught the tower, which was made of fir poles and calico. The tower burnt rapidly, so that I never beheld a fire so bright and straight. When the Sultan saw that, he hurried down and fled towards the river by the path which I mentioned above. Those of the Halca had broken up the pathway with their swords, and as the Sultan hastened along towards the river one of them smote him between the ribs with a lance, and the Sultan fled on, dragging the lance after him. They plunged in after him, swimming, and came and slew him close to the galley where we were.

One of the knights, whose name was Phares ed din Oktai, cut him in twain with his sword and tore out his heart. Then he went to the king, with his hand all covered with blood, and said to him : 'What wilt thou give to me who have slain thy enemy who would have made thee die had he lived?' But the king answered him never a word.

Immediately after the murder the French nobles were seized by the Mamelukes who had done the deed and laid head and heels together in the bottoms of their own galleys. They expected nothing but death on the following morning, and indeed the Emirs seemed to have quarrelled about it all night; but love of money was too strong for the majority, and on the following day they were again set at liberty and allowed to proceed to Damietta.

Once more it was the woman Shajar-el-dur who had saved Egypt from anarchy, and now, by a sudden caprice of the Mameluke Emirs, each unwilling to vote for any man but himself, she was proclaimed Queen of Egypt. If the Emirs had been capable of such sentiments as moral courage, gratitude, or chivalry, it would have been well for Egypt; but not even the experience of the wisdom of their choice could keep them loyal to it in the face of the ridicule which was poured upon them from all other parts of the Saracen world, and the experiment only lasted three months. Shajar-el-dur had chosen one of the chief Emirs, Eibeg (Ibek, Ybek, Eibeg, Aybak; all these names are spelt differently by each historian), as her Wuzir or Atabek, and in this short time they had honourably concluded the war with the French, and turned their attention to the government of the country and the relief of taxes. In Syria and Baghdad, however, Shajar-el-dur

was unknown, and the fact that the Emirs of Egypt had elected a queen to reign over them was received with incredulous astonishment and indignation.

> Is there no one man among you worthy to be Sultan? (wrote the Kaliph from Baghdad). Then will I give you one from hence. For what says the Prophet: 'Woe to the nation that is governed by a woman.'

Damascus flatly refused to own allegiance to a queen, and opened her gates to the Sultan of Aleppo, while all the other Egyptian possessions in Syria followed suit. The Mameluke Emirs of Egypt gave way at once. They forced the queen to whom they had sworn loyalty a few months before to abdicate; but as they chose for their Sultan the Emir Eibeg (under the names of El Melek el Moez el Jashenkyr el Turkomani Iz el din), and as Eibeg immediately married Shajar-el-dur,[1] the change was at first more nominal than real. But it was the beginning of fresh divisions. In order to secure himself, the Sultan Eibeg was forced to admit an eight-year-old grandchild of the Sultan Kamil to a nominal partnership in his throne. The poor child gained nothing from this but a cruel death in one of the dungeons of the citadel little more than a year afterwards, and with him ended the royal race of Saleh-ed-din the Kurd.

[1] Shajar-el-dur was not the queen's real name, but a nickname signifying 'The Tree of Pearls.'

CHAPTER XXVII

THE FATE OF A MOSLEM QUEEN

1250 THE followers of Mohammed, whether Turk or Arab, have
56 been the great slave traders of the world ever since his
59 immediate successors overran and destroyed the ancient civilisations of the East. Slavery, of course, has been known since the earliest dawn of history; it was the recognised fate of captives taken in war, and slaves have always been bought and sold for domestic servants since the world began. But in these earlier forms of slavery there always seems to have been one humanising influence, a sense of responsibility. In some of the ancient nations a slave had certain rights which only the worst masters ventured to disregard. Among the Hebrews he could legally claim his freedom after seven years' service; in most cases his ultimate freedom depended on his own conduct, and not on the arbitrary caprice of his master. But under the Moslems the slave was a mere chattel, with no rights beyond those of a beast of burden. It was the Arab slave trade which sapped the strength and morality of the Christian kingdoms of the Soudan, and eventually rendered them an easy prey to the Moslem; it was the Turkish slave trade which created that terrible tyranny of the Mamelukes under which Egypt groaned for centuries, and from which she has not yet recovered.

It was the quarrels between the two armies—the free Turks on the one hand, and the black slaves on the other —which had brought about the downfall of the Fatimite dynasty; and Saleh-ed-din, perceiving that neither Turk nor Arab would submit to the discipline necessary to make a really effective army, had adopted a new development of the policy of slave armies. He could not obtain blacks in sufficient numbers for his purpose without conquering the Soudan, and this he evidently came to the conclusion would be too desperate a venture. He therefore employed slave merchants in the mountainous countries of Southern and Eastern Europe to purchase systematically all the boys they could get by force, fraud, or fair bargain, who were suitable for his purpose. These were brought up as Moslems and soldiers; ignorant of their parentage, in some cases even of their nationality; and entirely dependent on the favour of their military commander. All Saleh-ed-din's descendants had followed his example, so that now almost the whole army of Egypt was composed of these European slaves. They were divided into regiments, each with a distinguishing mark sewn upon their garments; and were subject to no laws except the will of their commanding Emir, who at first was generally a freeborn Turk or Arab of good family, but afterwards came to be appointed or even elected from among the Mamelukes themselves. The last Sultan, Melek-el-Saleh, had so greatly increased the number of these fighting slaves that the barracks could not contain them, and very extensive new ones had been built on the island of Rhoda. From their chief barracks being situated on an island in the river, or Bahr, the Mamelukes whose headquarters were there came to be called the Baharites.

The new Sultan of Egypt had been a Turkish slave and had risen to the command of the Baharite Mamelukes. While he remained under the influence of his wife Shajar-el-dur, all went well in Egypt; though in Syria the Sultan of Damascus, who was of Saleh-ed-din's family, refused to recognise a Mameluke slave as any better qualified to rule Egypt than a woman. He made overtures of friendship to the French, who on leaving Egypt had gone to Syria. As this alliance would have been fatal to the Mamelukes, Eibeg hastened to forestall the Sultan of Damascus, and effected an alliance with the French on condition that the remainder of the ransom, only half of which had been paid, should be remitted, and that all the boys whom the Saracens had taken prisoners in the late wars and were educating as Mamelukes should be restored. It was also stipulated that all the Christian heads with which the ramparts of Cairo had been ornamented should be taken down and honourably buried. The Baharites agreed to these terms, and added a present of an elephant, which was the first seen in France.

Thus free from all fear of a coalition between the French and Turks of Damascus, Eibeg and Phares Oktai, the Emir who had given the final stroke to Touran Shah, went out to meet the army in Syria, and finally drove them back in confusion.

But the first encounter had ended in defeat for the Mamelukes; and on his return to Cairo, Eibeg found that the Arabs in Egypt had seized the opportunity to throw off the hated yoke of the Mamelukes, and to declare allegiance to the Sultan of Damascus. They mustered in the Said in great strength, but were defeated in the first pitched battle by the Turks. In revenge Eibeg gave up the two Masrs to the pillage of his Mamelukes. He shortly

afterwards treacherously murdered the Emir Phares Oktai,[1] whom he feared as a rival, and caused the child who was supposed to share his throne to perish in prison.

Whether Eibeg's cruelty or his impolicy most estranged his wife it is impossible to say, but they became enemies, and Shajar-el-dur lived apart from him for some time. Then she heard that he was about to marry the daughter of the Sultan of Mosul, and the cup of his offence was full.

It was not, of course, that the Moslem wife expected to be all in all to the man whom she had raised to the throne. Moreover, she had borne him no son; and therefore, like all of her faith, she fully recognised his right to repair the omission on her part through the instrumentality of other women. He had the usual harem, and one of his concubines had already presented him with a son, and earned her freedom thereby. But to give his consort a

[1] Makrizi tells a curious story of the adventures of twelve Mamelukes belonging to the troop of Phares Oktai, who took flight into the desert of 'Tih Beni Israel' after the murder of their master, and lost their way. After five days' wandering they saw in the distance a town, and rode all that day towards it. On the sixth day they entered a deserted city solidly built 'of green marble.' Sand had drifted into the silent streets and houses, but in one shop they found clothing which fell into dust when they touched it. In the same shop were nine pieces of gold graven with the figure of a gazelle and Hebrew characters. These they took, and by digging they found a spring of fresh water, which was of far more value to them for the moment. Having thus refreshed themselves, they left the deserted city and marched all night. In the morning they fell in with a troop of Bedouin, who guided them to Karak. At this place they offered the gold they found in the green marble city to the money changers. One of them at once declared that this money had been coined in the time of Moses, and insisted on knowing where it came from. The Mamelukes told the story of the deserted city, and found that the Jews of Karak knew of its existence by tradition. They declared that it had been built by the children of Israel during their forty years' sojourn in the desert.

rival of royal birth, who would expect to take precedence of her and usurp the queenly state to which Shajar-el-dur had been accustomed, this she could not tolerate. She issued her commands, and the thing was done. Five white slaves strangled Eibeg in his bath, and Shajar-el-dur, sending for the two principal Emirs of the Mamelukes, showed them her husband's body, and offered on the spot to bestow her hand and the kingdom on one of them.

Both refused bluntly the perilous honour, and departed. In the early morning the Mamelukes of Eibeg's regiment surrounded the palace, calling for vengeance on his murderer. The young son of Eibeg was elected to succeed him, and the first act of the boy was to deliver the murderer of his father to the vengeance of his own mother. The unhappy queen was beaten to death in the harem by the wooden clogs of the women, and her body thrown out into the desert below the citadel, where it was half eaten by the dogs before anyone saw to its burial.

About this time, either in the year 1257 or 1258, one of the great obelisks which still marked the deserted city of Heliopolis fell to the ground. It must have been, as we know that some of them were, cased in metal, for it is recorded that the fallen obelisk yielded 200 cantars of copper. 'The summit alone,' says Makrizi, 'produced ten thousand pieces of gold.'

During the troubles of the past ten years the Christians, though suffering with the rest, had not been subjected to any official persecution, and in the early period of Shajar-el-dur's reign they had ventured to elect another Patriarch after the throne had been vacant seven years. Cyril's successor was a man named Athanasius, elected in 1250, who did his best to repair the mischief caused by his predecessor;

but the mere fact that almost all the bishops owed their consecration to Cyril's greed of money must have made it terribly difficult to deal with them, and apostasy among the Christians had become frequent. When Eibeg was murdered, his young son was put under the charge of an Egyptian named Theodorus, who for the sake of advancement had, under the Patriarchate of Cyril, renounced his Christianity and taken the name of Sherif-el-dyn. He was a physician by profession, and showed great ability as Prime Minister to the boy-Sultan. As might be expected, he hated the Christians whom he had betrayed, and he levied a double tax upon them, though he did not otherwise openly oppress them. But peace and good government were the last things desired by the Mamelukes, and in little more than a year there was another revolution. Sherif-el-dyn, more loyal to his earthly master than to his heavenly one, strove desperately to defend his pupil, but was taken prisoner and crucified at the gate of the citadel. Eibeg's son was also murdered, and the Emir Seyf-el-din took the kingdom under the name of Melek-el-Mozaffer. He reigned barely a year, which he spent in Syria, fighting against a great invasion of the Tartars, and was murdered on his return journey by another Emir of the Mamelukes, who on the strength of this and other achievements was elected Sultan in his stead.

This man may be considered the first real Sultan of the Mamelukes, though, not counting Shajar-el-dur, he was the fifth who had usurped supreme power. His names were Roukh-ed-dyn, Beybars-el-Bondokary, El Melek-el-Daher, Abou-l-foutuh El Alai; and he is generally known as Beybars, Bibars, or Bibros.

Bibars, who was a tall fair European with blue eyes,

took the throne in 1260 (A.H. 658), and soon showed that he had some idea of the responsibilities of a ruler. He regulated the taxes with some regard to justice, and received with great honour the Kaliph of Baghdad, who had lost everything but his life in the invasion of the Tartars. He organised the pilgrimage to Mecca, which had been neglected in Egypt for twelve years; and on the Governor of Mecca refusing entrance to the Egyptian pilgrims Bibars made a speedy march upon that city, killed the governor, recovered possession of the holy places, and returned to Cairo. When in 1262 a terrible famine broke out in Egypt, Bibars opened his granaries and fed thousands of people daily, while he sent hastily abroad for further supplies. After the famine was over he celebrated the circumcision of his son with great pomp; and as a thank-offering to God he paid the expenses of the circumcision of six hundred and forty-five other children at the same time, who were carried in solemn procession in the robes which he had given them. The presence of the Kaliph gave additional solemnity and splendour to this public spectacle.

Being, either from policy or conviction, a good Moslem,[1] it was not to be expected that Bibars should show much toleration to the Christians. Besides, he wanted money for his wars in Syria. At this time the Patriarch Athanasius died, and two men, John and Gabriel, were marked out as candidates, for whom the votes were equal. The

[1] At one time he absolutely prohibited the sale or manufacture of beer throughout Egypt, and constantly endeavoured to do the same by wine. He had one of his principal Emirs strangled because he was convicted of drinking wine. The use of coffee was discovered in Yemen about this time, but was not introduced into the West till nearly three centuries later. Many devout Moslems would not touch it, placing it in the same category as wine.

question was decided by the Heikeliet in favour of Gabriel, but John bribed the Moslem authorities to insist on his own consecration. In the present state of the Church the bishops had not patriotism enough to resist. John was consecrated, and governed the Church for nearly seven years. The money thus acquired, however, was not enough for the Moslems, and a fresh pretext was seized on the occasion of a fire in Cairo, which almost destroyed a great part of the town. The Christians were accused of having caused it, and compelled to pay 50,000 dinars, nominally to repair the city, but the money was really used for the expenses of the wars which Bibars carried on all through his reign. While he was absent in Syria, in 1269, the Egyptian bishops took courage to depose John and consecrate the lawfully elected Gabriel as their ruler. But in two years' time Bibars returned. John appealed to him with the money which was his strongest argument, and was reinstated in spite of the Church. Gabriel died soon after, and John was left undisturbed till his death. But the Egyptian Church in her list of Patriarchs inserts Gabriel's name before that of John, to mark her sense of his superior claim. On Bibars' return he was received with the greatest honour in Cairo; the city was decorated, and his entrance was a triumphal procession.

During the Patriarchate of this John, the Emperor of Abyssinia again sent to Egypt for a Metropolitan. It is evident from his letter[1] that the Emperor's father

[1] I address my request to the Patriarch of Alexandria, our Father John, whom I salute with all the reverence due to the successor of Mark and Annianus.

Listen to my words, and grant me my request. Send me a virtuous Metropolitan, who will be able to instruct me in all things good and useful. Follow the counsel of the Prophet David, who in his Psalm

had introduced Greek Prelates from Syria, and that his son was anxious to restore his country to the jurisdiction of the Egyptian Church.

The Greek Church had recently made an effort to assert herself in Egypt as well as in Abyssinia. During the early years of the reign of Bibars, the Emperor of Constantinople had sent a special embassy to request that the Sultan of Egypt would permit the election of a Patriarch for the Greek Church in Egypt, which was then without a head. Bibars consented, and an oculist was chosen and sent to Constantinople to be consecrated. But nothing more is known of him, and even his name is given differently by different writers.

Towards the close of the thirteenth century, and probably in the reign of Bibars, an incident occurred which shows how great was the respect paid to the Patriarch of Egypt in Abyssinia. An Egyptian merchant had sent a

has addressed to you these words: 'O my son, do not leave your sheep to the fangs of the wolf.' These Syrian Metropolitans who reside in Abyssinia have only attracted our hatred. We have always belonged to the Patriarchate of Egypt; nor should we so long have suffered these strangers to exercise episcopal functions, we should have chased them from their thrones, only that they enjoyed the protection of our father, who had near him no bishop of your choice. But now do not permit the ruin of a kingdom which is under your charge, and send us a Metropolitan, to the end that our Lord Jesus Christ shall rain blessings upon you. Think upon St. Mark, and do not abandon us to punish us for our sins. Choose for us a Metropolitan; or, if the thing does not depend on you, demand permission from the Sultan to do so. When you have granted our demand you shall obtain all that you most desire. Do not suffer that these Syrians should any longer exercise authority in our country. For the rest, if you tell us to expel them, we will expel them. If you command us to keep them with us, we will execute your orders. You have disapproved of our conduct with regard to them; but deign to pardon our fault, that our sin may be remitted. Pardon also all our compatriots, and let your benediction repose upon us in life and death.

considerable sum of money to his agent in Abyssinia. The agent died, and his master found himself without any means of recovering his money. He appealed to the Sultan, who recommended him to apply to the Patriarch of the Christians. The Patriarch (in all probability John VII.) consented to help him, and wrote to the Emperor of Abyssinia begging him to use his influence to get the money restored safely to its owner.

When it became known that a letter from the Patriarch had arrived in Abyssinia, all the governors of the different provinces hastened to receive it. The letter was placed on the ——.[1] He who bore it and his followers were supplied with horses ; and were magnificently fed and lodged in all the countries through which they passed before arriving at the capital. Here the king received the messengers with every mark of distinction. On the following Sunday the letter was publicly read by the Metropolitan in the cathedral and in the presence of the king. While it was read the king stood with his head uncovered to hear it, and immediately afterwards he gave orders for the money to be brought and handed over to the Patriarch's representative. Besides the money, the king loaded him with presents, and he was conducted out of the country again with the same state which had attended his entrance.

While the Sultan's attention was engaged in Syria and Asia Minor, the King of Nubia was ill-advised enough to draw attention upon himself by an invasion of the province of Assuan, where he did considerable damage. The Emir of Kous promptly started off in reprisal, and, invading Nubia, penetrated some way towards Dongola, pillaging the country and laying it waste. He made prisoners of several Nubian nobles—among others, of the

[1] A word I have been unable to decipher.

viceroy of the northern province—and on Bibars' return to Cairo they were presented to him as trophies. Bibars with the barbarity of his kind had them all cut asunder in the middle of the body.

This David seems to have been a very unpopular King of Nubia, and in 1275 (A.H. 674) his nephew Shekander, who, according to the Nubian law of succession, was his heir, sought refuge at the Court of the Slave-Sultan, and disgraced his faith and lineage by betraying his own country to the Moslems. Bibars was, of course, delighted with the chance offered to him, and sent a numerous army under two of his principal Emirs to invade Nubia, with the ostensible purpose of asserting the rights of the heir Shekander.[1] The Nubians came to meet the invading army, and fought with great courage, but were eventually overpowered. The Moslem Emirs advanced into the interior, spreading devastation on every side and killing or seizing for slaves all whom they found in their line of march. The viceroy of the southern province submitted to acknowledge Shekander as his king instead of David, and was allowed to retain the governorship of the country. David with a fresh army came to meet the invaders, but was defeated, and his mother, sisters, and brother were taken prisoners. David saved himself by flight, and Shekander was proclaimed king in his stead on the following humiliating conditions :—

He was to cede to the Sultan of Egypt the northernmost province of Nubia (which was a fourth part, and that the most fertile part, of the whole kingdom). He was to revive the ancient tribute of 400 slaves, from which Nubia had been free for more than two centuries, and in addition

[1] This name is probably a corruption of Alexander.

to the slaves was to send yearly to the Moslem ruler of Egypt three elephants, three giraffes, five panthers, one hundred dromedaries, and one hundred bullocks. He was to set at liberty all the Moslems who had been taken prisoners by David in his recent descent on Egypt. He was to send to the Sultan all the treasure and all the herds belonging not only to David, but also to all the Nubian nobles who had fallen in the late war. He was to consent to the establishment in Dongola of Moslem officials to look after the collection of the tribute due to the Sultan. A church which the impolitic David had caused to be built by the forced labour of the Moslems whom he had captured in his recent expedition was razed to the ground, and gifts which had been presented to it to the value of 13,000 dinars (?) were seized by the Emirs.

From this date the ruin and downfall of the Christian kingdoms of the Soudan became a mere question of time. Once more the collection of slaves for tribute necessitated perpetual fighting and anarchy, so that all good government became impossible, and the kingdoms of the Soudan were set one against another, instead of making common cause against the Moslem. The richest province of the Nubian kingdom had been lost, and it was no longer possible to keep the Moslems out of the interior. In their new province the Emirs of Bibars offered the inhabitants the usual choice: the faith of Islam, tribute, or death. As generally happened, the inhabitants chose the tribute, and every male Christian paid annually the poll-tax of one dinar. The Moslem army only occupied Dongola seventeen days, and, having concluded the treaty, returned to Egypt.

Next year, when heading an expedition against the Tartars in Syria, Bibars died of his own superstition. A

total eclipse of the moon presaged, as he believed, the death of a prince. He suspected a young prince, grandson of Touran Shah, the last Kurdish Sultan, of intent to poison him, and determined to cheat the oracle by arranging that the unfortunate youth, against whom there was no shadow of evidence, should die instead of himself. He filled a cup with poison, which he offered to the unsuspecting prince, who drank without hesitation. Then Bibars left the room, and during his short absence one of the servants, not knowing what had happened, refilled the cup. When the Sultan came in again, restless and feverish, he took up the same cup in ignorance and drank from it. There was still poison enough in it to kill him, and the two princes expired within an hour or two of each other.

During his reign Bibars had done a good deal for Egypt. The fortifications of Damietta, Rosetta, Alexandria, and Cairo had been repaired and strengthened, public granaries had been built at Cairo, bridges had been repaired, canals renewed, and many celebrated mosques had been rebuilt and repaired. He also built a new one, to the north of Cairo, of great size and magnificence. The square in which it stands, on the road to Abbasyieh, is still called Il Daher or Zahir, after one of the names of the Sultan Bibars. The four walls of the mosque are there, and much of the beautiful tracery is left in the windows, but the building has long since lost its religious character. The French turned it into a fort about a hundred years

[1] It is said that more than once on urgent occasion the Sultan went with all his Emirs to help in the repairing of a canal, and carried a basket of earth with his own hands 'in the sight of all the world' by way of setting an example.

ago, and after their expulsion the Moslems continued to use it as a military post. It is now a commissariat depôt of the British army.

Bibars had so firmly established himself on the throne of Egypt that no objection was made by the other Mameluke Emirs to the succession of his son Barkah Khan. But there could be no lasting sentiment of loyalty under the circumstances, and within three years the two young sons who successively bear the empty title of Sultan in the lists were deposed or slain, and another of the Mameluke Emirs, Seyf-ed-din Kalaoun-el-Elfi, possessed himself of the throne of Egypt.

CHAPTER XXVIII

TWO INVASIONS OF THE SOUDAN

1281 997 681 THE new Sultan was a Mameluke of uncertain nationality, whose nickname of El Elfi commemorated the fact that in his youth he had been bought for the sum of 1,000 (*elf*) dinars. He had, as usual, to fight for his usurped position in Syria, but crushed the revolt against him without much trouble. In the next year, 1282 (A.H. 682), he was, unfortunately for Egypt and the Soudan, free to occupy himself with their affairs. The Christians had already suffered cruel injustice under the brief reign of Barkah Khan;[1] and Kalaoun, though in the first year of his reign he remitted certain taxes equally for his Moslem and Christian subjects, soon renewed all the vexatious and humiliating restrictions upon the latter, which generally fell into disuse whenever the Sultans were fighting away from Cairo. At such times no one took any particular notice of the civil administration except the permanent officials, who were

[1] In the year 678 of the Hejira all the Christians in the War Office were dismissed and replaced by Mohammedan clerks. This wholesale dismissal of Christian employees happened several times under Moslem rulers, but sooner or later it was always found necessary to take the Christians back. On the same day that this edict was published the monastery of Khandak, in the suburbs of Cairo, was razed to the ground, an immense rabble pouring out of Cairo to assist in its destruction.

always Copts and generally Christians; no Turk or Arab being capable of the work. Kalaoun's interference soon produced acute discontent among all the Egyptians, whether Moslem or Christian; and the Slave-Sultan, after the fashion of his kind, resolved to teach his subjects a lesson. He turned his Mameluke army loose upon Cairo, and for three days the unhappy city was given up to murder and pillage. No attempt was made to discriminate between the innocent and guilty, the streets ran with blood, and were encumbered with the corpses of men, women, and children. At length the Ulemas took courage and approached the Sultan with the thunders of religion. They not only succeeded in stopping the carnage, but so successfully worked on the superstitious fears of Kalaoun that he undertook to make expiation, in the form of a mosque combined with a great Muristan, or hospital for the incurable and insane. Of this, only the tomb remains; the mosque which now forms part of it was added by his son; the hospital has long been disused, and small remains of it are left.

Kalaoun's attention was fortunately diverted from the government of the country to a safer and more congenial occupation, the reorganisation of the uniforms of the Mameluke regiments, which kept him out of mischief for a whole year. He added very greatly to the numbers of the army, but almost all the boys he bought were Circassians, as it seemed to him that these made the best soldiers. He had little faith in the loyalty of the Baharite Mamelukes, and changed his Wuzirs so often that contemporary historians have not attempted to record their names.

In 1286 (A.H. 685) Ador, the king of the southernmost kingdom of the Soudan, sent ambassadors to the Sultan of

Egypt to complain of the latter's vassal, Shekander, King of Nubia. The precise cause of complaint is not stated; but probably Shekander had been raiding the southern kingdom for slaves to supply the yearly tribute demanded by his Moslem suzerain. The latter gladly seized the opportunity to send an officer back with the envoys of King Ador in the double character of ambassador and spy. He made the journey in safety; but Shekander was on the watch for the spy's return from the south, and, though his escort made a considerable detour to avoid passing through Dongola, they were arrested and brought before the King of Nubia. He gave orders that they should all be put to death; but the nobles of his Court interposed and indignantly demanded if the king were mad. They pointed out that, little as Kalaoun might care about the subjects of Ador, the murder of his Moslem ambassador would give him just the excuse he wanted for the invasion of Nubia. As Shekander was obstinate, they deposed him and made Shemamoun king in his stead. The Moslem and his escort were permitted to return to Egypt in safety; but Kalaoun's intentions were not turned aside, and he almost immediately despatched a large army to invade Nubia. Shemamoun adopted singular tactics. He wrote to the viceroy of the northern province to attempt no resistance, but to evacuate the country as the Moslems advanced, leaving as little as possible for the Moslems to destroy. In this way the Emirs penetrated without fighting the whole way to Dongola, where Shemamoun was waiting to give battle. He was defeated, however, and fled into the interior. Then the Moslems took the son of Shemamoun's sister and made him king, on condition of his owning allegiance to the Sultan of Egypt. After this they

returned to Egypt, carrying with them great booty of flocks and herds.

No sooner had they quitted the country than Shemamoun reappeared, his subjects received him with joy, and the king who had promised allegiance to the Sultan of Egypt was turned out of the country with the Moslem garrison which had been left in Dongola. Kalaoun, furious at this unexpected turn, prepared to conquer Nubia in grim earnest. All the militia—as that part of the army was now called which consisted of free men, whom long descent had taught to call themselves Egyptians, in distinction from the Mameluke or slave regiments—was ordered on this service, besides 40,000 mercenaries recruited from the Arab tribes of the northern provinces. Once more the Moslems swept through the Nubian kingdom, set up a new king in Dongola who had been dragged from a Cairo prison and was also nephew to the former King David, made him swear fealty to the Sultan of Egypt in the principal church of Dongola, left a garrison in that city, and returned to Cairo at the end of six months. Once more they had hardly left the country before Shemamoun reappeared in Dongola, the whole land returned to its allegiance, and the Moslem garrison was conducted beyond the frontier. This time, however, Shemamoun did not allow their kingly nominee to leave with them, but put him to death by torture. Kalaoun did not attempt a third expedition, and Shemamoun reigned in peace till his death.

Kalaoun did not live very much longer. His eldest son and heir died of a fever, and his father is said to have felt the loss very much. He sought distraction in a fresh war against the Christians in Syria, took the city of

Tripoli, massacred all the inhabitants, and razed the town to the ground. This, however, was his last exploit, and he returned to Cairo, where he received an embassy from the King of Arragon shortly before his death.

His eldest son, Saleh-ed-din Khalil Melek-el-Ashraf, proclaimed in the following year (1291) a holy war against the Franks, and did, in fact, dispossess them of Acre after an obstinate siege. He massacred all the inhabitants and destroyed the walls. He also brought to Egypt as a trophy of victory the portal of one of the principal churches of Acre, which may be observed to this day in the copper bazaar, where it forms one of the entrances to the mosque of his brother Nasr ebn Kalaoun. During his short reign also this Sultan built the well-known bazaar Khan Khalil, which is the constant resort of tourists; it was built on the site of some ruined tombs of the Kaliphs.

After his victories in Syria the Sultan invaded Armenia, ravaged the country, and took the city of Erzeroum. On his return to Egypt a fresh persecution broke out against the Christians, in which they show to less advantage than at any other time in their history. Generally, whatever their faults at other times, a persecution has brought out all the latent heroism of the Copts, who guard against their own weakness to this day by branding themselves with the sign of the cross,[1] in order that they may put it out of their own power to deny that they are Christians.

[1] This branding – or, to speak strictly, tattooing – is not done in infancy, but when the boy is old enough to know what it means and to give his own consent. There is also an old tradition among them that Egypt will one day be delivered from the Moslem yoke by the Christians of the South (Abyssinia), and that this mark will make it easier in that day for the invaders to recognise the faithful.

But ever since the time of the infamous David (Cyril III.) the character of the Egyptian Christians had undergone an accelerated process of deterioration. Apostasy was no longer infrequent, and Christians in the employ of the Government were too often Christians only in name, as they were now signally to prove, and misused the power entrusted to them.

The persecution, indeed, began with a street riot, occasioned by the fact that the Christian steward of one of the principal Emirs rode through the streets of Cairo with one of his master's debtors, who was a Moslem, walking at his side under arrest, with his hands tied behind him.

The people gathered round at this, so that by the time he came to the crossway of the mosque of Ebn Touloun a large crowd followed him, every man of which entreated him to let go the prisoner, but he would not grant their request.

They then mustered in greater number, pulled him down from his steed, and set his prisoner free. This happened near the house of his master, to whom he sent his servant to ask him to come and deliver him from his assailants. He came out with a batch of the Emir's slaves and body-guards, who rescued the secretary (or steward) from the crowd, and began to ply their sticks and to disperse them. But they shouted 'It is not lawful!' and they ran hastily until they stopped under the citadel, and cried 'God help the Sultan!' He heard them and sent to inquire about the matter. And they made known to him the overbearing way the Christian secretary had behaved towards the agent (the debtor), and what followed.

The Sultan then sent for Ain-el-Ghazal and addressed him thus: 'How can thy people behave as they have done towards Moslems for the sake of a Christian?' Ain-el-Ghazal excused himself, saying that he was busy at his office and knew nothing about it. Then the Sultan sent to fetch

all that were in Ain-el-Ghazal's establishment, and ordered the people to bring to him all the Christians. He also sent for the Emir Bedr-ed din Beidar, the governor, and the Emir Sandjar esh Shodjai, and ordered them to bring before him all the Christians, to put them to death. These two Emirs, however, did not leave him till the matter was decided (till they had persuaded him to reconsider his decision), and it was cried throughout Cairo and Masr that no Christian or Jew should remain in service with an Emir. And he ordered all the Emirs to propose the faith of Islam to all the secretaries they had, and to cut off the heads of all those who refused to embrace it, but to retain in their service all who did. He also gave orders to the governor (Bedr en Naib) to make the same offer to the Christians of the Court and to treat them the same way.

An order was given to look for them, and they hid themselves ; but the people forestalled them in their own houses, which they plundered until the sack was general, both of the Jews' houses and of those of the Christians, one and all. They led away their women captive, and put to death a number of people with their own hands. Then the Emir Bedr en Naib went up to the Sultan about the conduct of the people, and coaxed him till he (Bedr the governor) rode to Cairo and proclaimed that whosoever plundered the house of a Christian should be hanged. He also beat a number of the people, and marched them about the city after having scourged them. Thus the plunder was stayed, but not before they had plundered the church of the Moallakah in Masr (Babylon), and had put to death a quantity of people there.

Then the governor brought together a number of secretaries of the Sultan and of the Emirs, and placed them before the Sultan, at a certain distance from him. The Sultan then ordered Esh Shodjar and the Emir Djendar to take those men with them, and to go down to the horse market under the castle, there to dig a large grave, to throw into it all the

secretaries now present, and to light a fire of wood on the top of them.

Then the Emir Bedr came forward and pleaded for them, but the Sultan would not receive his plea, saying, 'I will not have a Christian Diwan in my Government.' Yet the Emir did not quit the Sultan until he had consented to this—that so many of the secretaries as embraced the faith of Islam should be retained in their office, but that those who would not should have their heads cut off.

He therefore brought them out to the house of the governor of the city (his own official residence), and said to them: 'O ye, all of you, I have not been able to prevail with the Sultan on your behalf but on one condition, which is—that he of you who prefers his religion is to be put to death, but that he who prefers El Islam shall receive a robe of honour, and it shall be well with him.'

Then El Makin ebn esh Shikai, one of the secretaries of State, came forward and said to him: 'O lord, which of us men, high in office, would choose death for this good religion? By God—a religion for which we should have to die and go—God has not written on it His peace! Tell us, you the Sultan and thyself—the religion you wish us to choose and to follow.'

Then Bedr burst out laughing and said to him, 'My good man, what other religion should we choose but El Islam?' Then El Makin replied, 'O lord, we know not; do you tell us, and we will follow you.'

Then the public notaries came in, made them Moslems, and wrote a deed of witness thereof, wherewith Bedr went in to the Sultan, who clothed them with robes of honour, and they went in them to the council of the Wuzir Es Saheb Shamse-ed-din Mohammed ebn Selous. One of those present addressed El Makin ebn esh Shekai and handed him a sheet for him to write upon, saying, 'O Kadi, our master, write on this sheet.' He answered, 'O my son, it is not for us to decide.' They did not leave the council of the Wuzir until

the evening, when the warder of the gate came to them and took them to the council of the governor, where the Kadis were already assembled; and there the secretaries renewed their profession of Islam in their presence.

And thus, from men despised they became honourable and honoured through embracing Islamism. But they also began to despise the Moslems, and to lord it over them with a violence which Christianity would have forbidden them to use.[1]

The usual fate of the Mameluke Sultans overtook Khalil shortly after. He was murdered in his harem, at the instance of an Emir who hoped to succeed him; but the Mamelukes of Kalaoun murdered the usurper in his turn the next day, and chose Nasr, the younger son of Kalaoun, who was only nine years old, to be their nominal Sultan. The real power they gave to one of themselves, Zeyn-ed-din Ketbogha, who shortly after murdered his principal rival among his fellow-slaves, and, sending the child Nasr to be imprisoned in the fortress of Karak, he proclaimed himself Sultan of Egypt.

Ketbogha reigned two years, to be in his turn deposed by Lajyn, another of his fellow-slaves, who seems to have been of German origin. Lajyn reigned about the same length of time and was murdered by one of his own slaves; another Mameluke Emir was proclaimed one day and murdered the next; and for forty days the throne remained vacant while the Mameluke Emirs quarrelled among themselves. Eventually they agreed to recall the boy Nasr, and govern in his name.[2]

During these years Egypt had suffered greatly from

[1] Makrizi (Malan's translation).

[2] In the year that Nasr was recalled to Cairo such heavy rain fell that many tombs were entirely wrecked by the water rushing down from the Mokattam hills.

natural causes as well as from oppression and anarchy. Pestilence and famine had almost decimated the population. Athanasius, the Patriarch of the Greek Church in Egypt, deserted his post and fled to Constantinople. John, the Egyptian Patriarch, died in the same year that Ketbogha usurped the throne, and was succeeded by Theodosius, of whom we only know the curious fact that he was a 'Frank,' perhaps the descendant of one of the French captives taken in the invasion of St. Louis. For the six years of his Patriarchate the Christians enjoyed a brief respite from persecution, but worse days were in store for them. Nasr seems to have attributed his misfortunes to an unholy tolerance of the Christians in his realm, and the chief Kadi was the son of one of those men who had apostatised from Christianity, and was bitter against the Christians. The first year of Nasr's return to power[1] was the first year of a new century, which is one of the saddest in the records of the Church of Egypt.

[1] In this year also cattle plague broke out in Egypt, and raged with such virulence that but few beasts were left alive. A native of Ashmoun Tana, who had 1,021 head of cattle, lost all but eighteen of this great herd.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE CHURCHES

1300 1016 700 The eighth century of the Hejira, which corresponds to the fourteenth century of our era, gives us an almost unbroken record of persecutions suffered by the Egyptian Christians at the hands of their Moslem rulers.

The Mohammedan writers assert, and it has been the fashion for most Christian historians to accept the assertion without inquiry, that these persecutions were brought upon the Christians by themselves; that they were, to use the complacent words of Neale, 'occasioned by their own fault.' But a careful examination of the statements in Makrizi and other Moslem writers, on which this charge is founded, show that they are absolutely insufficient to establish it. The complaints of arrogance and harshness brought against them resolve themselves into the simple fact that the Christians presumed upon their admitted indispensability to the Moslem Government to behave as free men and not as slaves. They disregarded the vexatious and cruel laws which had been in former times passed for the express purpose of humiliating and oppressing them, and which were still unrepealed. They dared to appear in white turbans; and when one of them, high in Government employ, was seen riding publicly through the streets on a horse, followed by a crowd of

petitioners, it was felt that severe measures must be taken. The principal Moslems clamoured for the destruction of all the Christian churches, as well as for the enforcement of all the penal laws against them; and though the Governor of Cairo refused to grant the former demand, he did not dare to refuse the latter. He sent, however, for John VIII., the National Patriarch, and the principal men of both the Jewish and Christian communities, and warned them that he could not answer for the consequences if they did not oblige their people to obey the laws against them. John VIII. at once wrote letters to all the dioceses, ordering that the Christians should wear blue turbans and girdles, and refrain from riding on horses or mules on pain of excommunication, since in such matters the powers that be were to be obeyed. The churches, though only a few of those recently built were destroyed, were ordered to be shut up; but this order the Patriarch did not attempt to enforce, and in consequence it was neglected, except in Cairo for a time during which disobedience would have been followed by the total destruction of all the churches and popular riots. All the care and wisdom of the Patriarch, however, could not entirely avert the storm when once popular fanaticism was aroused. Once more the whole army of Christian clerks was dismissed from Government service; once more the mob hooted and stoned inoffensive Christians daily in the street, or pulled down and savagely beat anyone who ventured to ride even on the permitted ass. In Alexandria and the Fayoum the popular riots against the Christians were particularly fierce, and the Government did not attempt to restrain them. The festival of the Nile—or the Feast of the Martyr, as it was by this time called—was

forbidden, and the lives and property of the Christian and Jewish populations were in hourly danger all through the country.

Such was the state of things for three years, till an embassy from the King of Barcelona arrived with the ransom of a prisoner who had been recently taken in war (probably in Syria), and the envoys were horrified at the state of things they found in Egypt. They offered the Sultan large additional sums if he would permit the churches to be opened, and the presents were accepted. Some relief was certainly given, but Makrizi records with apparent pride that only two churches were permitted to be opened; and further records that, though the prisoner was freed and allowed to depart with the ambassador, they were afterwards pursued by order of the Sultan. Probably the pursuers disguised themselves as robbers. All that had been given them was taken from them, and the unfortunate prisoner was retaken and put in irons. Makrizi appears to think this rather a fine action on the part of the Sultan.

During these three years of persecution, in the year 1301 the Moslem population of the Said, who were chiefly the descendants of Arab settlers, rebelled against the rule of the Mamelukes. Several of the chief Mameluke Emirs were despatched to crush the rebellion, which they did with pitiless ferocity. The greater part of the population was put to the sword, so that the stench of their corpses filled the land. Sixteen hundred of the principal landowners were seized and all their property confiscated. Innocent and guilty, Moslem and Christian, were involved in the same wholesale ruin; in some of the districts no man was left alive, only those women and children who were not worth being taken as slaves.

Next year a terrible earthquake contributed to the ruin and demoralisation of the country. Some towns—notably Kous—were entirely destroyed. The fourfold cities of Cairo were left 'as though they had been overthrown and ruined by an enemy.' The young Sultan was far from happy in his kingdom. He gradually realised that his violence against the Christians had only thrown the whole civil administration of the country into confusion without conciliating his Moslem subjects, or at any rate those whom he had most reason to fear, the Mameluke Emirs. By the year 1309 he had grown so weary of the constant complaints and disputes that, under pretext of making a pilgrimage to Mecca, he retired to Kerak, and from thence sent word to the Mamelukes that they might choose whom they liked to reign over them—he would have nothing more to do with it. But when they took him at his word and elected one of his own slaves—Roku-ed-dyn Bibars II.—Nasr ebn Kalaoun changed his mind. He went first to Damascus, where he was welcomed as the true Sultan, and then marched down to Egypt. The Mameluke Emirs flocked to his standard, and Bibars II., hastily collecting all the treasure in the citadel—which is said to have amounted to 300,000 dinars, and to which no doubt the recent plunder of the Christians had largely contributed—fled to Akhmin. He was, however, pursued by Nasr ebn Kalaoun, the treasure recaptured, and himself strangled.

The rest of the reign of Nasr ebn Kalaoun, which lasted thirty years longer, shows him in a very different light. Taught by experience, he did his best to protect the Christians, both from the violent rapacity of the Mamelukes and the religious fanaticism of their Moslem

fellow-subjects; and occupied himself in valuable public works, and in an endeavour to restore good government to the distracted country. But though the respect and good-will of the Sultan could do something, he was often powerless to restrain the outbreaks of popular fanaticism, and ten years after his return (1320) fresh outrages roused the Christians at last to retaliation.

The beginning of the affair was simple enough. The Sultan desired to build a jetty on the Nile bank for the convenience of his new Meidan.[1] It should be remembered that the Nile bank of 1320 is not the Nile bank of to-day. The river has shifted a good deal to the westward, and its old bed is covered with the houses of modern and even mediæval Cairo; for the new buildings were erected as soon as the ground was dry. In the time of Nasr ebn Kalaoun there was a newly-formed island, between Cairo and Boulac, upon which was already built a mosque, a mill, and several houses with spacious gardens, which were a favourite resort of the people of Fostat. Still, in years of flood it is recorded that the island was covered with water, and the streets converted into canals, while the inhabitants went about in boats. The eastern branch of the river which washed the town of Fostat was, however, always shallow; and, as time went on, it dried up altogether. The eighth century of the Hejira is full of records of the formation of new islands, which gradually became part of the eastern bank in Cairo, and of the ineffectual attempts of the Mohammedan rulers, at vast expense, to control the river.

[1] The literal translation of the word Meidan is 'riding school,' which would give a false impression. It was a great open court belonging to one of the Sultan's palaces, to which he used to descend every day from the citadel.

In the particular spot of this half-dry channel, which the Sultan had fixed upon for his jetty, on a fragment of older and higher ground, stood the church of Zehry. If left alone, it would have occupied a conspicuous place on an island in the middle of the little basin which the Sultan was digging to receive the waters of the Nile, and this would have been a constant offence to the Arabs. Still, the Sultan shrank from giving orders for the actual demolition of the church, and merely desired his men to dig very closely all round it, so that it might become undermined and fall in of its own accord. But though the church was left, as it were, suspended in the air, it still refused to fall, and the complaints of the Moslem workmen grew loud. Angry murmurs ran through the country that the Sultan was favouring the Christians, and Mohammedan fanatics were not wanting to the occasion. How, or by whom, the plot was formed was never known, but about three weeks afterwards the smouldering fire of fanaticism broke into open flame.

It was on a Friday, in the burning splendour of a June day, that the signal was given. On that day, at the hour of noonday prayer, when the faithful were gathered in crowds into the mosques, alike 'in Cairo, in Alexandria, in Damanhour, in Assiout, in Manfalout, in Kous, in Assuan, and in five other of the principal towns in Egypt,' the same thing happened. At the close of the prayer a fakir—who appears in each case to have been a stranger—suddenly raised himself from among the congregation, and cried out with strong trembling, as of one who receives a command direct from Heaven, 'God is great! God is great! O my brethren, let us go forth and destroy the churches!'

In most cases the Moslem crowd needed no second bidding. In Cairo the cry was raised in three places at the same moment—on the site of the excavations before the church of Zehry, in the mosque at the citadel, and in the great university mosque of El Azhar. The first church to fall was the obnoxious Zehry, of which not one stone was left upon another. Everything of value was stolen by the crowd, which then rushed towards the church of St. Mena, in the Hamra quarter. This church had been from time immemorial a special object of veneration to the Egyptians, who sent offerings to it from all parts of the country, so that it had at this time one of the richest treasuries in the kingdom, not only in money but in beautiful vestments, vases, and other works of art. Around it lived a large colony of Christians, who 'had retired from the world,' without apparently any definite monastic establishment.

The crowd flung itself upon these buildings, and in an hour or so they were sacked from top to bottom, and the defenceless inhabitants beaten and despoiled. Being, however, more intent on plunder than destruction, they did not stay to pull down the buildings, but swept on to the Church of the Maidens, near the aqueduct, in the precincts of which there were also a great number of monks and nuns living. They broke open the gates, dragged out more than sixty nuns who had hastily taken refuge within, pulled the very clothing off their backs, and pillaged everything they could find. Then they set fire to the Church of the Maidens, and to another hard by which had shared in the general wreck. Still unspent, the wave of destruction swept southward to Babylon.

By this time, however, the news of the outbreak had

gone before them. The gates of the old fortress—which enclosed then, as now, six churches—were hastily closed, and the Egyptians prepared to defend themselves. At the same time the Sultan, hearing the noise of the riots—for another mob was engaged in destroying the churches of the Mouski and the Zawilah—sent in haste to inquire the cause, and, hearing what was going on, bestirred himself at once to prevent further mischief. Word was brought to him that the Kasr-el-Shamma (the Arab name for the old Roman fortress in Babylon) was holding out against a besieging mob, but could not do so any longer, unless help were sent speedily.

The Emir Idgamish, accompanied by four other Emirs and a troop of cavalry, galloped off to Babylon. The captain of the watch had preceded him and personally endeavoured to restrain the mob, but had been driven back by a shower of stones. The mob were in the act of firing the gate, which had resisted all their efforts to break it open, when Idgamish charged up, sword in hand, at the head of his troop and shouted his command to stop. The great crowd wavered and fell back for a moment, and Idgamish seized the occasion to make loud proclamation that any man found on that spot after the expiration of one hour should be instantly put to death.

It was enough. The multitude took to their heels with the greatest promptitude and the churches of the fortress were saved. Idgamish remained at his post till the hour of evening prayer, in case of a renewal of the attack, and on retiring he left strict orders with the commander of the watch that he should pass the night on guard before the Deyr. He left him a reinforcement of fifty men.

Meanwhile the Emir Alamas, who appears not to have relished similar orders given him to quell the riot and save the churches, found those which he had been told off to protect already level with the ground, and leisurely retraced his steps to acquaint the Sultan with the fact. The Sultan ordered the immediate arrest of the fakir who had given the signal in the mosque of the citadel, but was informed that he could not be found. The streets were full of men laden with the spoil of the churches and the Christians. On being interrogated, they invariably declared that the Sultan himself had ordered the publication of the command to destroy the churches. There appears, however, to have been no reasonable ground for this accusation against him; and as, on the succeeding days, letters arrived from town after town with the same report of riot and destruction of churches, the Sultan became furious and declared that the ringleaders should be punished.[1] From this apparently startling intention his Emirs with difficulty restrained him, pointing out to him, says Makrizi, that the events which had happened could not be attributed to human agency, since no one,

[1] The following churches are known to have been destroyed at this time.

In Cairo: The church of Zehry; a church within the walls of the citadel on the place called 'the Ruins of the Tartars'; the church in the Hamra quarter; the Church of the Maidens, near 'the Seven Aqueducts'; the church of Mari Mina; the Church of 'the Guardians of the Leopards'; a church in the Greek quarter; another in the military quarter; two in the street of Zawilah; church near the flag depôt. One church at Khandak; four churches in Alexandria; two churches at Damanhour; four churches in the province of Garbiah; three in the province of Sharkiah; six in the province of Behnesa; eight in the province of Siout and Manfalut; eleven in the towns of Assiut and Assuan and Minieh and li Kasib; one in Atfih; nine in Fostat; the Convent of the Mule and numberless other convents.

not even the Sultan himself, however much he had wished it, could have organised so simultaneous and widespread a rising. It became him rather to recognise the hand of God, who wished to punish the Christians for the arrogance and impiety with which they clung to their own faith.

This view of the matter, however, did not commend itself to the Egyptians, exasperated by this climax to a long period of injustice and oppression, and it is to be feared that there is some truth in the Mohammedan account of a plot formed by the monks of the Toura Convent called the Monastery of the Mule to revenge themselves on their oppressors.

About a month after the destruction of the churches incendiary fires broke out in several places at once in the towns of Cairo and Fostat. From Saturday till Sunday evening the first fires lasted; and hardly had they been with great difficulty brought under than fire broke out in another quarter; and this time, aided by a wind so strong that it wrecked the boats upon the river, it bade fair to consume the whole town. The air was thick with smoke, and from every minaret the fakirs and holy men lifted up their voices in loud supplication to the Almighty. Night came, but the fire only burned more fiercely, and the air was full of shrieks and lamentations. On the Tuesday morning the Sultan gave orders to guard all the gates of the town, and to impress every water-carrier into the public service, while the carpenters and masons were set to pull down houses before the fire in order to check its onset. No one, of whatever rank, was exempt from personal service to save the town; and the great street which led from the Bab Zawilah was filled with water till

it presented the appearance of a river. Still, every day fresh fires broke out, and the vigilance of the authorities could not relax for a moment. By public proclamation the inhabitants of each quarter were ordered to place in every street a cask or a *zeyr* [1] full of water, ready for emergencies, so that the price of casks and jars rose to an extraordinary height.

Popular acclamation had already accused the Christians of firing the town, and at length on a Friday in the same month (July) two monks were caught going out of the college of Kehar, just after fire had broken out in that place. The Sultan was immediately informed of the arrest, and commanded that they should be put to the torture. Hardly had the Emir bearing this order descended from the citadel than the populace dragged before him another Christian, whom they had found in the Mosque of Zahir and upon him several bags full of naphtha and pitch. On being put to torture in the presence of the Emir he declared that he had been given these bags and told to deposit one of them in the Mosque of Zahir.

The monks under torture confessed that they belonged to the Monastery of the Mule, and that it was they who had fired the college. Kerim-el-din the Kadi, whose house had been set on fire and barely saved, suggested that the Patriarch of the Egyptians should be sent for, since he always knew everything that was going on among his people, and was consulted by them on every occasion. John IX., who had peaceably succeeded John VIII. a few months previously, was therefore sent for under cover of the night and a guard of soldiers, for fear lest he should suffer at the hands of the infuriated populace. On being

[1] A *zeyr* is a very large jar of porous clay.

confronted with the three Christians who had been arrested, in the presence of Kerim-el-Din they repeated to the Patriarch the avowal they had already made to the Mohammedan authorities. John burst into tears, and explained that there were fanatical Christians who desired to revenge themselves upon the Mohammedan madmen who had destroyed their churches.

The Patriarch was dismissed in safety and honour, and Kerim-el-Din [1] even went so far as to order a mule to be made ready, that he might ride back to his house. But he was recognised by the wild mobs swarming in the streets; they surrounded him, and would have torn him to pieces, had not the captain of the watch stood by him and brought him off in safety. In the morning, when the Kadi, according to his custom, came out of his house to go up to the citadel, he was in turn surrounded by a howling mob, who cursed him for protecting the Christians after they had set fire to the houses of the faithful. Kerim-el-Din, however, nothing daunted, went up to make his report to the Sultan, and assured him that it was only a handful of ignorant madmen among the Christians who were really to blame. The Sultan ordered the torture to be applied again and with far greater severity to the prisoners, apparently in the expectation that they would give up the names of richer and more influential Egyptians. But in the midst of their torments they held firmly to what they had before stated—that the whole conspiracy was the work of fourteen monks of the Monastery of the Mule, eight of whom had undertaken to burn Cairo, and six the town of Fostat. Babylon was to be left untouched, since, as seems

[1] Kerim-el-Din was a Copt, and his family had not been Moslems for more than a generation.

probable, the remains of that ancient city were then, as now, entirely occupied by Christians. On this second confession messengers were at once sent to the Monastery of the Mule, who brought back as prisoners all the monks they could find. Four of these were burnt in the midst an enormous crowd.

From this moment the excitement of the Mohammedans of Cairo and Fostat increased to such a frantic pitch that all pretence of law and order was abandoned. Every Christian whom they met was murdered and plundered without remorse. They turned against the Sultan, who had given them peace and prosperity for ten years past, and one morning as he descended from the citadel to the Meidan he found all the streets blocked by a surging mob, who howled at him and called aloud upon Allah to protect the faith. The Sultan held on his way, but hardly had he entered the Meidan than the captain of the watch reported to him that two Christians had been caught in the act of setting fire to a house. He gave orders that they should at once be burnt alive in the presence of the multitude. As the execution was being carried out, Kerim-el-Din in his official robes passed by the place, and the mob instantly turned their fury against the Kadi, and flung a shower of stones upon him. He was forced to retrace his steps and take refuge, pursued by the howls of the mob, in the Meidan. The Sultan hastily demanded the reason for this fresh outbreak, and on hearing from Kerim-el-Din what had happened he was furious with anger, and appealed to the Emirs with him for their counsel in the matter. Emir Seyf-el-din proposed that a messenger should be sent to ask the rioters what they wanted, and Djemal-el-Ain suggested that, as it was well known that

hatred of the Christian officials was at the bottom of the affair, there was now no need to have recourse to violent measures; it would be sufficient to pacify them by at once dismissing all the Christian officials from the Government offices. Neither of these recommendations pleased the Sultan, who, on the contrary, at once desired the Chamberlain to take with him four Emirs and a number of Mamelukes, and to patrol Cairo from the gate of the Meidan to the Bab Zawilah, and from thence to the Gate of Victory (Bab-el-Nasr), ordering them to put down the riot with a strong hand, and to spare no one. He then commanded the captain of the watch to guard Bab-el-Louk and the river-banks, to arrest without distinction all who endeavoured to escape, and bring them to the citadel. 'And if,' he added in a fresh burst of anger, 'you do not bring those who would have stoned Kerim-el-Din, by the life of my head, but I will hang you in their place.'

The Emirs started, but, as they no doubt sympathised with the rioters in their hearts, they took care to linger long enough over their preparations to allow time to warn the mob outside. This was done to such good purpose that a regular stampede took place at once, and by the time the Emirs began their march not a soul was left to arrest; even their own servants had disappeared. The news of their approach spread before them like fire; the people scudded like rabbits to their burrows, the gates of all the bazaars were shut, and the patrol arrived at the Gate of Victory without having met a single person! Meanwhile the captain of the watch patrolled Boulac and the river-banks, and arrested a number of beggars, sailors, and tramps. This proceeding struck such terror into the populace that many of them plunged into the Nile, which was

then extremely low, and took refuge in Gizeh. Before sunset the unfortunate wretches who had not been able to escape, to the number of nearly two hundred, were brought before the Sultan. Nasr ebn Kalaoun did not bandy words about the matter. He forthwith commanded the ragged band to be divided into three companies—one to be hung, one to be cut asunder, and one to have their hands cut off. All began to bewail themselves with loud cries, declaring that it was not they who had thrown the stones at Kerim-el-Din. The Emirs joined their tears and entreaties to those of the hapless mob of prisoners, imploring mercy. In the end the Sultan allowed himself to be persuaded out of his original intention, but he ordered the captain of the watch to erect a line of gallows from the Bab Zawilah to the horse market, and on each of these a man, apparently taken at hazard from the prisoners who had been collected in this random fashion, was hung the next morning. The Emirs who were compelled to pass by them did not restrain their lamentations, and Kerim-el-Din, learning in how ghastly a fashion the street had been decorated with his supposed enemies, could not bring himself to take that road to the citadel, but went round another way.

On the next day the Sultan mounted his tribune and caused another batch of the wretched creatures who had been arrested by the captain of the watch to be brought before him. Before his face he ordered the execution to be proceeded with, and the feet and hands of three among them were cut off. The Emirs, seeing the Sultan's anger unabated, and fearing to bring it upon themselves, no longer dared to intercede for them. Kerim-el-Din alone on his arrival came forward, plucking his turban from his head and prostrating himself upon the ground, to implore

forgiveness for the unfortunate men, whom he must have known were in all probability entirely innocent of offence against him. The Sultan granted him the lives of the prisoners, but ordered that they should be set to forced labour on his works along the river. He also gave permission for the removal of the dead bodies of those who had been hung. The Sultan had hardly left the tribune when a fresh alarm of fire arose. It was said that the mosque of Ahmed ebn Touloun and the citadel itself were in danger, besides two other places of importance. In the course of the morning three more Christians were arrested, who, according to Makrizi, also frankly avowed that they belonged to the conspiracy of incendiaries.

For a week the strange scene was prolonged, the populace frantic with terror, the Sultan endeavouring to restrain them, the Christians hiding in fear of their lives, and both Mohammedans and Christians alike falling victims in turn to the anger of the Sultan or the fury of the mob. On the following Saturday the tumult reached its height. As the Sultan came down from the citadel to the Meidan, according to his wont, he found himself surrounded by a mutinous mob about ten thousand strong. They were all carrying blue rags marked with a white cross (?), and, as soon as the Sultan appeared amongst them, they all began to shout with one voice: 'Let there be no faith except that of Islam! God protect the faith of Mohammed! O thou commander of the faithful, help us against the infidels. No favour to the Christians!'

The Sultan saw himself on the brink of an insurrection, and trembled. It was not enough that he had tortured and burnt alive all those accused of firing the city; the Mohammedans thirsted for Christian blood, and it was

no longer safe to forbid them. His courage gave way. He made his way to the Meidan, and thence sent his Chamberlain to proclaim publicly to the multitude that they were free to kill every Christian they could find and take his property! And when the multitude heard the proclamation, they rent the air with blessings on their sovereign, and departed to carry out his orders. The terrible scenes which followed on this capitulation of the Sultan to the maddened mob, the wholesale slaughter and plunder of the Christian Egyptians in that reign of terror, are left to our imagination. The Moslem authors merely state that this thing happened, and proceed to enumerate the legal disabilities which were afterwards imposed upon the Christians who were left alive. They are the same as before—certain colours rendered compulsory; a bell hung round their neck when they entered the bath, to give warning to any of the 'faithful' who happened to be there, that they might avoid contamination; no Christian to be employed in any public office, or in the household of any Emir, or in any post under the Government in the provinces. Any Christian seen in a white turban, or riding either horse or mule, might be slain by the first Mohammedan who cared to undertake the task, and his goods were taken by the slayer. The use only of the ass was permitted to them, and then on condition that they rode with their face to the tail. And while the Sultan sat preparing these laws, the work of carnage went on, till the very fanatics themselves were satiated and began to fear for the consequences again, since they knew that they had carried out the orders of the Sultan 'with a bitterness beyond all bounds.'

It was necessary, says our Moslem authority, to

reassure them, and proclaim a general amnesty for anything they might have done. So that the next day saw the Mohammedan crowd once more following its Sultan with blessings and grateful acclamations, and it is recorded that the Sultan 'smiled upon them' in his relief.

But the lull was of short duration; in the following night flames broke out again in Cairo, and spread with such rapidity that it was feared the citadel itself would be burnt down. For many a day the Christians dared not show themselves outside their doors, and the churches remained closed for more than a year and a half —until the Emperor of Byzantium and the King of Spain sent embassies to the Court of Cairo, entreating some measure of toleration for their unhappy Egyptian co-religionists. Great numbers of them, it is to be feared, had apostatised in the meantime. The Patriarch's life was spared, and he lived some fifteen years afterwards. The Melkite Patriarch, Athanasius III., took care not to venture himself in his Egyptian diocese under these circumstances, and remained the whole time in Constantinople, busying himself with the squabbles between the Emperor and the clergy of that city. At length the Emperor banished him from Constantinople, but, being still afraid to return to Egypt, he went to the isle of Emboa, and finally to Greece, where he was thrown into prison.

Like many of the Egyptian clergy, however, he was versed in the study of medicine, and, having cured his captor, he was set at liberty. It is not known whether he ever returned to Egypt.

The penal laws made against the Christian Egyptians at this time did not include the Jews, and they seem to have profited by the troubles of the Christians. Makrizi

tells the story of a Jew who owed a Christian a large sum of money. The latter, being dismissed from his post and in need, disguised himself and went to the house of the Jew, begging for repayment. But the Jew at once gave the alarm, and a Mohammedan crowd collected in a few moments to seize the Christian. The latter escaped by a flank movement into the interior of the house, where he implored protection from the Jew's wife. She had compassion upon him, and concealed him on the premises for the night; but before he was allowed to depart in the morning he was compelled to give the Jew a receipt in full for the unpaid debt.

In the year 1325, when the violence of the persecution had somewhat abated, Nasr received a letter from the Emperor of Abyssinia, commanding him to rebuild the churches which had been thrown down by the Moslems, and to treat the Christians better, or he would throw down every mosque in the kingdom of Abyssinia, and intercept the course of the Nile. Nasr laughed at the Emperor's threats, and dismissed his envoys without answer. What the result was to the mosques of Abyssinia we know not, but the Nile does not seem to have been affected.

In the year 1327 there was a fresh outbreak of the Mohammedans, and the church of St. Barbara was destroyed. The only reason given for this by the Moslems is the fact that the Christians *with the permission of the Sultan* had ventured to repair this church, and in so doing had slightly enlarged the building. The church was not rebuilt immediately, but is now to be found on its old site within the Roman fortress. In this year John IX. died, and was succeeded by Benjamin II.

The remaining years of the reign of Nasr ebn Kalaoun passed more quietly, and he employed himself chiefly in

rebuilding Cairo. Several schools and colleges owe their existence to him, also public fountains, and more than one mosque besides the beautiful one in the copper bazaar which still bears his name; nor were his public works confined to Cairo alone. He re-dug the navigable canal which formerly connected Alexandria with the Nile, but had been allowed to fall into ruin, dug another canal from Kankah to Syrakus, and strengthened the embankments of the country, besides building several bridges in different parts. It is evident that the Mameluke Emirs did not at all approve this substitution of good government for perpetual war and plunder, and Nasr became yearly more unpopular. He found occasional work for the Mamelukes in sundry expeditions against Nubia, where it had become the regular thing for the Sultan of Egypt to play off one claimant of the throne against another. The Nubian people invariably returned to their rightful sovereign, who refused to swear fealty to the Moslem Sultan of Egypt, as soon as his troops had left the country; but all the old ties of patriotism and Christianity were rapidly perishing in the continued anarchy consequent on the enforced slave trade and the perpetual invasions of the Moslems in favour of some new pretender to the throne.

Nasr was devoted to horses, and it is said that during some years of his reign 3,000 were raised in his stables annually. In the year 1337 (A.H. 738) he lost the most beloved of his sons, the Emir Anak, and never really recovered from the shock of this bereavement. Of the eight who were left to him, all but one were still children; and it must have been evident to him that there was little chance of the reforms which he had endeavoured to undertake being carried on after his death. The Mameluke Emirs waited like vultures to quarrel over his body and reintro-

duce the reign of violence which he had done his best for twenty years to restrain.[1] On January 6, 1341, Nasr died, almost alone; his body was hastily interred at night, and unattended. His eldest son was indeed allowed to assume the throne, but within forty days he was deposed by the Mameluke Emirs and exiled, while the harem of his father was violated and pillaged by the Mamelukes.

From the harem they brought a child of six, whom in mockery they called their Sultan for five months, before they thrust him into the dungeon where he died.

One after another the eight sons of Nasr ebn Kalaoun were set upon a nominal throne for periods varying from forty days to three years, but allowed no real power, while the Emirs fought among themselves, and Egypt was left to the government of the permanent officials, which, as they were Egyptian and Christian, was the best thing that could happen to her. Of these eight sons, all were deposed except the fourth, whose nominal reign lasted more than three years, and who died a natural death. The other seven were all deposed—two died in exile, one in a dungeon, three were murdered.

The seventh son was Nasr-el-dyn Hassan, who succeeded in 1347 (A.H. 748); and though little more than three years afterwards he was deposed and imprisoned in the citadel, he survived to recover the throne of his father and reign for a short time in earnest before the usual fate of the Mameluke Sultans overtook him. During his first reign, in the year 1348, Egypt, like Europe, was visited by the terrible plague which we call the Black Death. The mortality in Egypt was frightful; whole families were

[1] Nasr became suspicious of everyone before his death. Contemporary writers assure us that he poisoned at least 150 people whom he imagined to be conspiring against him and confiscated their property.

exterminated, and their property at once seized by the Regent and the other Mameluke Emirs. Makrizi declares 15,000 persons died in Cairo in one day; but even if we include the four cities in the term Cairo, as it became more and more the custom to do, this number is incredible. As the same word—Masr—is used by Makrizi to denominate Cairo and Egypt indifferently, we must conclude that his statement here refers to the latter. In the cholera of 1883 the average number of deaths a day was about 300 in Cairo. Still, we know by our own experience that the Black Death was far more fatal than any subsequent visitation of pestilence, and a death rate of 1,000 a day in a single city was not uncommon at the height of the more severe outbreaks of plague in Egypt. The Patriarch Peter, who had succeeded Benjamin in 1340, died, and Mark IV. was elected.

It was during the reign of one of the sons of Nasr ebn Kalaoun that John Maundeville is said to have visited Egypt. He says that he dwelt there 'a great while,' and that the Sultan was well disposed to him and would have married him to an Emir's daughter 'if I would have forsaken my law and my belief.' Sir John gives a good deal of correct information about the country, mixed with statements manifestly fabulous and others which we cannot test. He says that the Sultan and four of his nobles, who had travelled in Europe in the disguise of merchants, spoke French very well. He also says that the Sultan told him that the Christians, for their sins, had lost the lands of Egypt and Syria. 'For we know well in very truth, that when you serve God, God will help you; and when He is with you, no man may be against you. And this know we well by our prophecies, that the Christians shall win again this land out of our hands when they shall serve God more devoutly.'

CHAPTER XXX

THE LONGEST PERSECUTION

1351 1067 752 In 1351 (A.H. 752) the eighth son of Nasr ebn Kalaoun reigned under the regency of the Emir Sheikhoun, and the three years of his reign were not without incidents worth recording. In 1353 a pestilence again ravaged Egypt which among others carried off the reigning Kaliph, for these shadowy Moslem Popes still continued to reside in Cairo. He was succeeded by his uncle, and he must have had some restraining influence on the Moslems, for the disorders of the country increased after his death. During this plague a Christian from the provinces arrived in Cairo, and lifted up his voice to denounce publicly the licence of the times and the evils of the Moslem faith. He was at once arrested and brought before the Kadi, where he declared that he sought to convince the Moslem world of its sin in rejecting Christianity, and that he was ready to suffer martyrdom. The Kadi kept him under torture for a whole week, after which he was beheaded and his body delivered to the flames.

Not long afterwards a Christian was denounced to the government of his native town on the frivolous pretext that his grandfather had professed the faith of Islam, and that therefore his descendant could have no possible right to be a Christian. The Kadi before whom he was brought quite

agreed with this view, demanded of the man that he should at once become a Mohammedan, and on his refusal threw him into prison. His death by torture seemed inevitable; but the Christians of that district were numerous, and knew that the governor of the town was friendly towards them. With his connivance they broke into the gaol by night and delivered their co-religionist. Next day the Moslem populace were furious at being baulked of their execution; they shouted for the Kadi, the shops were hastily shut, and the whole town was in insurrection. The mob attempted to seize and kill the governor, who called out his guard, but, overborne by sheer weight of numbers, he fled from the town, which remained at the mercy of the mob. Every Christian who had not succeeded in escaping was seized. The church was absolutely destroyed by the fanatical Moslems, its crosses and pictures burnt, and the materials used to build a mosque upon the same site. They next directed their fury against the Christian tombs, which were torn open in search of bodies to be burnt. All business was at a standstill, and the town was given up to the wildest anarchy.

The governor wrote up to Cairo, complaining that the Kadi by his unprovoked measures against the Christians had excited an insurrection and caused the loss of at least five hundred thousand dirhems of Government revenue. The Christians themselves wrote to one of the Emirs named Hosam to complain of the Kadi, and to demand that their church should be rebuilt. Both the Kadi and the governor were summoned to Cairo, and an inquiry held before four of the Cairo magistrates, the Wuzir, and several of the principal officials. It seemed clear that the Kadi of Nahririah had been to blame, but

the four Cairo magistrates sided with him against the Christians; and though the Emir Hosam and the Emir of Lower Egypt warmly espoused the cause of the governor, who had attempted to protect them, they stood almost alone, since the Regent of the kingdom, the Emir Sheikh-oun, was entirely under the influence of the Sheikh of his mosque, Akmel-ed-din. This latter inflamed the passions of the council by an harangue in Turkish, in which he seems to have declared that under no circumstances could it be right to take the part of a Christian against a Moslem, and ended with a bitter denunciation of the Emir Hosam, declaring that he had forfeited all claim to the fellowship of the faithful, since by espousing the cause of the Christians he had blasphemed the faith. Eventually a sort of compromise was agreed to, both governor and Kadi were dismissed, but no compensation was made to the Christians.

Indeed, the feeling against the Christians and the bitter jealousy of their pre-eminence in wealth and learning could no longer be restrained from breaking into open persecution.

It has been mentioned that during the last twenty years of his reign Nasr had shown himself more and more favourable to the Copts, and that they had carried on ever since the civil administration of the country, which always fell into hopeless confusion in the hands of the ignorant Mamelukes whenever they attempted to manage it for themselves. Some of these Copts had become Moslems, notably two, who, having done so, aspired to the rank of Wuzir, and disturbed the government of the country by their quarrels. But the greater part were still Christian, and presumed upon their official rank to disregard the laws against them, and to mix on equal or superior terms

with the Moslems, who saw with an evil eye their growing power and wealth. Many of them, whose Christianity was more nominal than real, behaved with the arrogance and rapacity which were considered the sole prerogatives of the Moslems; but their worst offence seems to have been their assertion of equality.

It came to this (writes the indignant Moslem historian), that one of the Christian secretaries passed before the mosque El Azhar in El Kahira, riding in boots with spurs, and white bands around his head, after the fashion of Alexandria; with footmen [1] going before him to drive away the people, lest they should throng him, and behind him a number of slaves in costly apparel, on prancing steeds.

The Mussulmans present could not brook this, so they rose up against him, made him come down from his horse, and were on the point of killing him. But, a great crowd having gathered round, they let him go. The multitude, however, had an interview with the Emir Tāz on the subject of the Christians and what they expected from him, and he promised to have justice done them by the Christians. They then sent up a memorial written in Mussulman terms, to be read to the Sultan El Melik-es-Sālch, in presence of the Emirs and of the Kadis and the rest of the Court, wherein was contained the complaint against the Christians, (requesting that) a council should be held on their account, in order to oblige them to keep to the conditions (imposed upon them).

An order was then given to call the Patriarch of the Christians and the chief men of his religion, and to fetch the chief ruler of the Jews and their elders, and for the Emirs and the Kadis to come in presence of the Sultan. Then the Kadi Ala-ed-din Ali Ben Fassl Allah read from beginning to end the treaty which had been written between the Mussulman and the dependent population (Copts), and which they had brought with them. All who were then present bound themselves by

[1] The ordinary Egyptian *syce*.

the terms thereof, and certified it. Then were also rehearsed to them their past actions, wherein they had played false, even as at present; so that, seeing how little they had departed from their former doings, and lest they should return to them, and again to what they had done, it was decreed that they should be shut out of everything connected with the Sultan's Court and government, and of the Courts of the Emirs, even if they professed Islamism; but that none of them should be forced to embrace it. And the same was written to the provinces.

The people then began to lord it over them, dogged their steps, laid hands on them in the streets, and tore down what raiment they had on; beat them cruelly, and would not leave them until they professed Islamism. They even went so far as to light a fire to throw them in. The Christians then remained hidden in their houses, and would not venture out to walk among the people. And as it was generally made known that no hindrance would be offered to their being ill-treated, the people began to follow them into their retreats, and to pull down all houses of theirs that rose above those of the Mussulmans. At last the condition of the Christians became so very bad in their hiding-places that for a long time they ceased altogether to walk in the streets, and not one, either of them or of the Jews, was to be seen.

The Mussulmans then sent up a memorial to the court of justice, on the second day (of the week, Monday), the 14th of the month of Rejeb, wherein they complained that the Christians had begun afresh to build their churches and to enlarge them. At the same time a large crowd gathered together at the castle, and implored the Sultan's help against the Christians. He then ordered the Prefect of El Kahira to ride thither and to inquire into the matter. Yet the people did not wait for leave, but hastened before, and demolished a church anent the Bridge of Lions, and a church in the street El Asra, in Misr, and the Church of Fahhadin, within the precincts of El Kahira; also the Convent of Nehya, in

Djizah, and a church in the neighbourhood of Batag-el-Tokruri.[1] They plundered the wealth of the churches they demolished, which was great, and carried away even the woodwork and slabs of alabaster. They rushed upon the churches of Misr and of El Kahira, and were about to destroy that of El Bondokayyin in El Kahira, when the Prefect rode in among them and tried to keep them from it, but the people were so desperate that they refused to obey the Prefect's order.

A decree was then sent in writing to the several provinces and to Syria, that no Jew nor any Christian should be taken into service, even if he embraced Islamism ; but that whosoever did embrace it should not be allowed to return to his house nor to the bosom of his family, unless they also become Mussulmans. Also, that if any poor Christian embraced Islamism, he should be made to attend the five prayers and the congregation (on Fridays) at the mosques and other places of gathering for prayer. And that, when a Christian died, the Moslems should undertake the management of his property among his heirs, if he had any ; but if not, it was to be confiscated to the public treasury. The Patriarch was charged with the duty of seeing to it, and wrote an order, which was read before the Emirs, and then was taken down by the warden of the palace gates on a Friday, the 16th of the second Djomadah, and read in the mosques of El Kahira and of Misr—and that day was a high day.

Then, towards the end of the month of Rejeb, they brought from the church of Shoubra, after it had been demolished, the fingers of a martyr which were kept in a casket and used to be cast into the Nile, in order, as they thought, to make it rise.[2] They were then burnt in presence

[1] Probably a mistake for Boulac Dakrur.

[2] This was the second stage of the Festival of the Nile. When the heathen ceremonies were abolished, the hand of a virgin martyr (mummied) was lowered in to bless the water. It was then called the Festival of the Martyr.

of the Sultan, on the plain of the Castle of the Hill, and the ashes thereof were thrown into the river, for fear lest the Christians should take possession of them.

At that time the news came that a number of Christians of the Said (Upper Egypt) and of the sea-coast (in Lower Egypt) had embraced Islamism and studied the Koran, and that the greater number of the churches of the Said had been pulled down and mosques built in their stead; and that in the town of Kalioub more than four hundred and fifty Christians had become Mussulmans in one day. Meanwhile the agricultural population of the country so managed by ways and means as to be employed in public offices, and to intermarry with Mussulmans, and thus to accomplish their object so far to mix the races as that the greater portion of the population are now descendants from them.

A strict inquiry was also made all through the land of Egypt to ascertain the extent of the endowments in land belonging to the National Church, and it was found to amount to 1,025 *feddans*.[1]

During this persecution the Patriarch Mark was thrown into prison for torture and eventual death. The King of Nubia heard of it in time, and seized all the Moslem merchants in his kingdom as hostages for the life of the Patriarch, who was released in consequence.

In the midst of this persecution of the Christians a successful plot between the Emir Tajedin and the imprisoned Nasr-el-Dyn Hassan once more replaced the latter on the throne of his father, which he occupied for nearly seven years.

Very little is really known of this prince, but his name will always be remembered as the builder of the magnificent mosque called after him, which stands below the citadel. In the year 1361 (A.H. 762) Hassan was murdered

[1] A *feddan* is a little more than an acre.

by his Emirs, and his nephew, a boy of fourteen years old, was called to be the nominal Sultan, whom the Mamelukes found it convenient to have as a figurehead. After two years he was deposed in favour of a still younger scion of the house of Kalaoun, Shaban ebn Houssein, who was allowed to reign till he was a young man of twenty-four—that is, for fourteen years—under the title of Melek-el-Ashraf III.

The Regent, Sultan in all but the name, was El Bogha-el-Amri, who had been a slave of Sultan Hassan, but was now reckoned chief among the Mameluke Emirs. In the year 1363 the Patriarch Mark died, and the new Regent seems to have been more favourable to the Christians, for the Church elected his successor, John X., without any trouble. The next year a terrible famine visited Egypt and Syria, which in some parts of these countries continued for three years, till the unfortunate inhabitants devoured their own children. To famine succeeded, in the North of Egypt, another invasion of the Crusaders, who in 1365 made a descent on Egypt and captured Alexandria after one day's resistance. The town was given up to pillage, and large numbers of women were carried off by the Franks. No lives were lost among the invaders, it is said, though a great number of the inhabitants and defenders were killed. The garrison abandoned the place and retreated on Cairo. But again the Crusaders deliberately threw away their own chances. They had a fleet of a hundred ships, an army of ten thousand foot and fourteen hundred horse; but when the council of war was held to determine their future action, only the King of Cyprus, who nominally commanded the expedition, and the Pope's legate were in favour of a march

on Cairo. The majority carried the day, and the expedition with its inglorious booty of women sailed away for Cyprus.

In 1369 (A.H. 771) an unfortunate Christian was seized and tortured to death on the suspicion of having by witchcraft caused the death of the young Sultan's wife, a daughter of the Emir Taj; but on the whole the Christians seem to have been fairly treated under this reign. John X. died in 1371, and was succeeded peaceably by Gabriel IV., who only reigned four years. In 1373 (A.H. 775) there was a famine in Egypt owing to the low Nile, and the usual liturgical processions were held in Cairo by Christian and Moslem alike, to cry aloud to the heavens for water. In one of these Makrizi relates that he took part, being then about nine years old. Famine, as usual, bred discontent, and the next year another revolution among the Mamelukes disposed of the Regent, who was cut to pieces by those of his own guard. Another Mameluke Emir, El Gai-el-Yusufi, was set upon the throne under the title of Regent. He married the mother of the young Sultan to obtain her fortune, then murdered her, and attempted to murder Melek-el-Ashraf, but by an almost unexampled instance of loyalty among his Mamelukes, who rallied round and fought for him, the Sultan escaped this time. But he was now a young man, capable of real government, and disposed to assert his right to do so; therefore the Emirs resolved to compass his destruction. Several plots against him failed, but at length he gave them the opportunity they wanted by leaving the kingdom on a pilgrimage to Mecca. The Emirs laid in wait for him, cut his escort to pieces, and supposed that the Sultan was slain also. They returned

to Cairo and offered the crown to the reigning Kaliph; for the Kaliphs had, ever since their flight to Cairo more than a hundred years earlier, wielded from thence a spiritual authority which was respected or not, as it suited the Moslem world, but never enforced. Mutewakil was too wary to endanger his position by yielding to the request of the Emirs, and bade them choose whom they would, and his sanction should be ready. At this juncture it was discovered that the Sultan, who had been left for dead, had returned to Cairo and was concealed in the house of one of his friends. The Emirs instantly descended on the house, and strangled the Sultan before anyone had time to rally round him. They then set his son, whose infancy was his chief recommendation, upon the throne; and after two different Emirs had been chosen as Regent and deposed, the Emir Barkuk seized and kept that office for himself.

The father of Barkuk was one of the Christian lads bought in Circassia by the slave dealers for the Egyptian market. He was, as usual, ordered to renounce his faith in favour of Islam, and was bought in the year 1364 by the Regent El Bogha, who, struck by his beauty and intelligence, permitted him to be educated in the learning of Egypt, and finally elevated him to the rank of Emir. His son Barkuk, at the time of his master's murder, was already of sufficient importance among El Bogha's Mamelukes to be thrown into prison with his chief friend Berekeh when the rest of the Regent's bodyguard were allowed to disperse. Barkuk, however, shortly succeeded in recovering his liberty, and took service with the Governor of Damascus, till the Sultan Melek-el-Ashraf recalled him to Egypt, and gave him the command of a Mameluke

regiment. After the murder of the Sultan, Barkuk served his infant son faithfully as Regent during the short reign of the latter, and showed himself well worthy of the trust committed to him.

For some time the affairs of Nubia had been going from bad to worse under the constant interference of the various Sultans of Egypt, who, however much they might disagree with their Emirs, always agreed as to the policy of encouraging civil war and the slave trade in the Soudan.

The descendants of one of the rightful kings of Nubia, who had spent much of his reign in fighting against pretenders encouraged by the Court of Egypt, had become a formidable tribe, known as 'the Children of Kenz,' who, allying themselves with the nobles of another powerful tribe of Nubia, carried on a guerilla warfare against all Moslems, and rendered all the roads between Assuan and Suakim unsafe. Under the Regency of El Bogha an expedition had been undertaken against this tribe by the Moslems, under the guise of friendship for the reigning King of Nubia, which ended in the partial destruction of the Children of Kenz and the total destruction of the old city of Dongola, which was left without inhabitants. The horrible cruelties perpetrated by the Mamelukes on this expedition provoked a popular insurrection among their own people in the province of Assuan, which was put down with equal barbarity.

When Barkuk became Regent for the youthful Ali, the Governor of Assuan was an Emir who surpassed all Moslem traditions in his barbarity, particularly towards the Children of Kenz, whenever any of that tribe fell into his power.

He sent the infant Sultan twelve heads and 200 living men of the Kenouz loaded with chains as an acceptable present. The tribe of Kenz rose against the Emir at last, pillaged the town of Assuan, killed a number of the inhabitants, and made themselves masters of the whole province, which for many years ceased to belong to the kingdom of Egypt. Before the insurrection began, the infant Sultan of Egypt died; and though his brother, who was then six years old, was elected Sultan in his stead, he was deposed within two years. In 1382 Barkuk was elected Sultan by the unanimous voice not only of the Emirs but of the Kaliph Mutewakil, the magistrates, and the Ulemas.

Nevertheless, three years later Barkuk discovered that the Kaliph was plotting to dethrone him, and threw him into prison, declaring that he was no longer Kaliph, and appointed another, who only lived a year. His successor also displeased Sultan Barkuk, and was deposed in favour of Mutewakil, whom the Sultan released from prison and restored to his honours.

Mutewakil, however, had neither forgiven nor forgotten, and this time his plot was successful. Barkuk was seized, deposed, and imprisoned at Karak. The Child Haji, who had been deposed for his sake, was recalled to the throne in 1389 (A.H. 791). He only reigned eight months, but during that time some curious scenes took place in Cairo which give the last reign of the last Baharite Mameluke an interest of its own.

It was now thirty-six years since a terrible persecution had led to an unprecedented number of Christians renouncing their faith, and reduced those who remained faithful to the lowest depths. During this time there had been

many fanatical outbreaks against the Christians, but no authorised persecution on the part of the Government. Still, there was constant oppression; and though it is hardly to be supposed that many of the apostates of 1354–5 survived to take part in the scene of 1389, there had been frequent apostasies under pressure. One in particular the Moslems record with special pride, on account of his high social position about three years before this time. The renegade, Michael Sabaan, was led in triumph about the city clothed in royal robes and mounted on one of the Sultan's mules, after which he was rewarded with an important post under Government. Since the accession to the Patriarchal throne, however, of Matthew in 1375 there had been a revival of religious and patriotic feeling among the Egyptians, and many of those who had apostatised returned to the true faith.

In the year 1389 a strange procession entered Cairo —a great multitude of men and women, who cried aloud as they marched that they were Christians, and that they renounced the faith of the false prophets, which they confessed with shame that they had adopted for fear of persecution. Their object in calling attention to themselves thus publicly was to expiate their former fault by voluntarily seeking that martyrdom the fear of which had made them traitors to their Lord.

They were surrounded, and the Moslem authorities in vain demanded their instant return to the faith of Islam. They constantly exclaimed with one voice, 'We are come here to be purified from our sin, and by the sacrifice of our lives to earn the pardon of our Saviour.'

As it was found that not one could be terrified into yielding, it was resolved to make an example of the men

first. They were marched to the open place under the windows of the College of Saleh, separated from the women, and beheaded one after the other. The terrible sight had no effect on the determination of the women, but rather confirmed them in their desire for death. Finding them obstinate, one of the chief Kadi took upon himself to order his guards to take the women without further delay to the foot of the citadel and behead them all. This was done; but many even of the Moslems cried shame on the Kadi for putting women to death by beheading.

The example was not lost on the Cairo Christians. Within a few days a monk, his friend, and three women connected with them, were beheaded and burnt—the first for preaching against the faith of Islam, the others for standing by him and encouraging him through his martyrdom. Towards the end of the year both the Patriarch Matthew and the Chief Rabbi of the Jews were thrown into prison; and the former had to be ransomed at the cost of 100,000 dirhems, the Rabbi at 50,000.

But the cruelties of the Emir and the Kaliph, who exercised supreme power in the name of the young Sultan, were not confined to the Christians, and the wise rule of the usurper Barkuk was fresh in men's minds. Before his imprisonment had lasted a year he was unanimously recalled by the Mamelukes to the throne, and his first act was to order a general massacre of El Mansur Haji and all his adherents.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE CIRCASSIAN SLAVE-SULTANS

1390 1106 792 Barkuk, who is counted the first of the Circassian slave-dynasty, came to the throne for the second time in the year 1390 (A.H. 792), and reigned ten years. At this time two great Moslem chiefs were struggling in Europe and Asia for supreme power — one of them was Tamerlane, the general of the Tartars; the other was Bajazyd, fourth of the family of Ottoman Turks who were shortly to win the leadership of the Saracenic world. Both of them sent ambassadors to the Sultan of Egypt: Timour, or Tamerlane, with threats to desire his instant submission as vassal to the world's conqueror; Bajazyd to entreat his friendship and alliance. Barkuk for sole answer to Timour put his messengers to death, and concluded with Bajazyd the treaty which he desired. Timour was too busy pushing the conquest of India to revenge the death of his ambassadors or to make good his insolent threats.

Barkuk had therefore leisure to pay some attention to the civil government of his kingdom, and showed himself capable of other forms of government than the brute force on which the Mameluke Sultans of both dynasties almost entirely depended. He lessened the taxes, suppressed a vexatious custom-house at the port of Boulac, and even found time to bestow patronage on learned

Moslems. He built a college, called, after his assumed title, El Madrasseh-el-Zahirieh. Under him one of the best-known Mohammedan historians flourished, who is generally known as Makrizi. This celebrated man was of true Arab descent, and had made the most of the opportunities for study which Egypt still afforded in a greater degree than any other country which had come under the paralysing yoke of the Moslems. He was born at Cairo in 1364, and his love of learning was such that it triumphed over the deepest prejudices of race and religion. He was ready to learn even from the Christian and the Jew; and though his history of the Copts shows the uneasy hatred of a Moslem who affected to despise while compelled to acknowledge the mental superiority of the 'dependent population,' it nevertheless records for us most valuable details of some of the persecutions. He wrote many works on jurisprudence, history, theology, and topography, and took a prominent part in the civil administration of Cairo. He was officially connected both with the ancient mosque of Amr in Fostat and with that of El Hakim in Cairo, while he was one of the teachers in the college of Moawiyah and filled the office of Kadi several times. When Barkuk came to the throne in 1390 Makrizi was about twenty-six, and must have viewed with deep thankfulness the return to power of a Mameluke who had room for other ideas in his head beside those of fighting, plunder, and persecution.

Barkuk, however, was not unmindful of the traditions of his caste, and spent vast sums on the purchase of European lads to recruit the Mameluke regiments, and on the acquisition of arms and horses for warlike purposes. He reorganised the whole army; and instead of many

plundering bands, each under their own Emir, he placed them under the direct orders of nine great officials appointed by himself. These were known as the (1) Atabek-el-Assaker (General in Command of all the Forces), (2) Ras Noubet-el-Omra (Head of the Emirs), (3) Emir-el-Zeloeh (Head of the Artillery), (4) Emir Meglis (Grand Marshal of the Palace), (5) Emir Akhoun (Head of the Cavalry), (6) Daoudar (Chancellor), (7) Ras Noubet-el-Thani (Second in Command of the Emirs), (8) Hageb-el-Hogab (Chief Chamberlain), (9) Naib (Governor of Cairo).

These officers formed a sort of Privy Council, and were supposed to meet the Kaliph, the Emirs, and the Kadis or magistrates of the city, to deliberate on the measures proposed by the Sultan—at whose pleasure, however, they were nominated and removed. With this assembly was to rest for the future the power of electing a new Sultan in case of a disputed succession to the throne.

In 1403 (A.H. 806) another terrible famine afflicted Egypt. Makrizi records that one of his daughters was ill, and he bought two chickens for her, but was compelled to pay for them seventy-four pieces of silver.

Only one instance of actual persecution of the Christians is recorded during Barkuk's second reign. One of the Emirs took upon himself to destroy a Christian church, where they were apparently engaged in making the sacramental wine for the year in that district; for he stole 40,000 jars of wine, which he solemnly broke before the Bab Zawilah in the square below the citadel, and poured out the wine as a libation to the faith of Islam. The same Emir then proposed in council that a regular persecution of the Christians should be organised,

but Barkuk was too wise to sanction a proceeding so fatal to all good government. Still, he permitted a man to be put to death who had renounced Mohammedanism for Christianity.

In the midst of his plans, however, Barkuk was seized with epilepsy, and died at the age of sixty years. Modern Cairo owes to him two of her most splendid monuments—the mosque which bears his name, but which was built as a tomb for his daughter, in the copper bazaar; and the family mausoleum also bearing his name among the so-called tombs of the Kaliphs.

His son Farag was permitted to succeed him without dispute, and was immediately called upon to suppress the rebellion of the Governors of Syria and Aleppo. This he did with comparative ease, but a more formidable enemy awaited him. Timour, returning flushed with success from India, reconquered Aleppo. He also obtained a great victory over Bajazyd; and on the heels of the messengers who brought this news to Egypt came a fresh demand that the Sultan of Egypt should acknowledge himself the vassal of Timour and return to him two fugitives who had taken refuge some years before with Barkuk.

Farag signed the decree, and, though he would not give up the two fugitives, he imprisoned them in Cairo. By this means he purchased peace; but his Mameluke Emirs were so indignant that, on the death of Timour two years after, they deposed Farag and elected his brother. Farag would have been killed but that his hiding-place could not be discovered, and after two months he was strong enough to retake the kingdom and drive his brother into exile, where he died. Still, he was

never able to recover the prestige he had lost by his compliance with the insolent demands of Timour, and four years afterwards a new plot proved more successful.

A slave who had belonged to Barkuk, and had been promoted by him to the rank of Emir, desired to attain the supreme power, and did so by working on the ambition of the reigning Kaliph, El Mustain b'Allah. The Kaliphs, ever since Bibars had received the fugitive from Baghdad, had lost all political power, and occupied very much the same position in the Eastern world that the Pope does at the present day in the Western. Sheikh El Mahmoudi, the ambitious Emir, persuaded El Mustain that by a bold *coup* it would be quite possible to reassert the ancient power of the Kaliphate and recover for himself the temporal sovereignty. The time was chosen when Farag was at Damascus. The Emir raised the standard of rebellion in Mustain's name, and summoned the Sultan to abdicate; but the Mamelukes hesitated, and the fortune of the revolt seemed doubtful, when the spiritual anathema of the Supreme Pontiff was thundered through the kingdom. The Prince of the Faithful declared that by his proclamation the Sultan Farag was deposed. 'The true Sultan of Egypt and Syria is now the Kaliph, descendant and Vicar of the Prophet. Pardon is offered to those who unite themselves with him. Woe to all who shall resist him.'

The effect of this laconic utterance was immediate and startling. It seems to have taken the Moslem world by surprise and compelled an awe-struck obedience. The Mamelukes of the Sultan deserted him. He was arrested and brought before the Kaliph, who formally condemned him as guilty of revolt against the representative of God

on the earth. He was solemnly executed on May 7, 1412.

All the Emirs took the oath of fidelity to the Kaliph, and Sheikh El Mahmoudi obtained under the name of Grand Wuzir the end for which he had striven. A solemn entry was made into Cairo amidst the plaudits of the Moslems, and the Kaliph was installed in the palace at the citadel.

The first care of these religionists was to despoil the Jews and Christians. Three commissioners were employed to inquire into their number and resources, and a registry office to receive their names was opened in the building adjoining the mosque of Hakim. Eventually the Jews and Christians were divided into three classes; the richest were to pay four dinars a year, the second class two, and the poor one dinar a year.

The Kaliph reigned nearly three years, and, though he oppressed the Christians, he also endeavoured to restrain the vices and violence of his Moslem subjects. This, however, soon rendered him very unpopular, especially with the Mamelukes; and it was not long before Sheikh El Mahmoudi felt himself strong enough to compel the Kaliph to grant him the title as well as the power of King, and subsequently to confine the Kaliph to his own palace. The Kaliph tried again the spiritual weapon which he had found so effectual before, and published a sentence of anathema and deposition against Sheikh El Mahmoudi. But an expedient of that kind does not often succeed twice. Sheikh El Mahmoudi and his Mamelukes openly scoffed at the anathema, seized the Pontiff, declared him guilty of revolt against *his legitimate sovereign*, deposed and sent him into exile!

Sheikh El Mahmoudi reigned for more than eight years under the name of Melek el Muaiyad. He is well spoken of by the Moslem historians, for he patronised Makrizi, who had accompanied him to Damascus when he went to fight against Farag, and had been employed in important posts in Cairo all through his reign. But he oppressed the Christians, and permitted his Mamelukes to indulge in open violence and persecution. The commander of the watch, whose business it was to preserve order, exacted from them large sums of money, and contributions of wine for his soldiers. By the ruined heaps of Babylon there was a colony of Christian wine merchants, and the whole district was still inhabited by Christians. The commander of the watch stormed the quarters as if it were a foreign town, took away all the wine that he wanted for his troops—who, being Moslems, had no right to touch it—broke the jars and spilt most of the remainder, and allowed his soldiers to pillage until the unfortunate inhabitants had paid him large sums to go away. The Patriarch Matthew had died in the reign of the Kaliph Mustain, and had been succeeded by a native of Gizeh named Gabriel. This Patriarch reigned eighteen years, and though, for the most part, they were years of trouble and persecution, he found time to write an exposition of the Coptic Ritual in addition to his other labours. He had been a layman and one of the Government clerks before he gave up everything to enter the Church and become its Patriarch, when the dignity only rendered him a mark for abuse and persecution. He was so poor that he depended for his daily maintenance on the alms of his people, nor would he take more than was absolutely necessary for his existence. He always went on foot, and

lived like the poorest of his people. For some time the decaying revenue of the Patriarchs of Egypt had been augmented by considerable sums of money sent yearly from Abyssinia to the Mother Church of Egypt; but on the accession of Gabriel this contribution ceased, apparently on the ground that, having been a layman in Government service, he was not a fit person to be chosen Patriarch.[1]

Under Sheikh El Mahmoudi all the old oppressive laws were put in force against the Christians, and in the year 1418 (A.H. 821) Gabriel was summoned before the assembly (the constitution of which was described under the reign of Barkuk) and threatened with death because the Abyssinians, who were supposed to be under his authority, were oppressing the Moslems settled in their country. After stormy discussions it was decided, as usual in times of persecution, that no Christian should be employed any longer under Government. They began by making an example of Fadail, the Christian Secretary of the Grand Wuzir. By the Sultan's order he was imprisoned and tortured, and then paraded naked through the streets of Cairo, followed by an official who cried aloud, 'Thus shall it be done to every Christian in the employ of the Sultan.'

It was doubtless hoped that this demonstration would be followed, as in the previous century, by a wholesale apostasy of the Christians employed in the Government offices. But that generation had grown up under the evil influences of the Patriarch Cyril; this had learned to be capable of better things under Matthew and Gabriel. The Christian officials barricaded themselves

[1] His unfitness probably refers to his marriage, for no respectable layman would have remained unmarried, and no married man was deemed eligible for the Patriarchate.

in their houses, and waited till the Moslems should again discover that the government could not be carried on without them. Some of them apostatised at a later date under the continued stress of persecution, and chiefly in order to revenge themselves on their oppressors. In the same year the head of St. Mark was stolen from Alexandria by a Venetian privateer, and this seems to have been regarded as a national calamity by the Egyptian Christians.

About this time the country again suffered, in the usual sequence, from drought, famine, and pestilence. Muaiyad ordered a pilgrimage to the sepulchre of Barkuk. He went himself with the Moslems and the Koran. At the same time processions were organised by the Jews with the Law, and the Christians with the Gospel; each chanting a Litany of supplication to the Almighty for deliverance from the plague.

During his reign Sheikh El Mahmoudi built the beautiful mosque which is called, after his second title, the Gama el Muaiyad, near the Bab Zawilah. After his death there was the usual bloody struggle for the throne. Three Sultans were successively elected and deposed within a year; but the fourth, a freed slave named Bers Bey, who had risen to the rank of Emir among the Mamelukes, succeeded in establishing himself firmly on that insecure elevation and retaining his position for the rest of his life.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE OTTOMAN CONQUEST

A.D. 1422
A.M. 1138
A.H. 825

Bers Bey came to the throne in 1422 (A.H. 825), and reigned under the title of Melek el Ashraf. The first year of his reign was signalised by a very high Nile, which brought plentiful harvests and was received by the people as a good omen for the new reign. For two years, indeed, the land enjoyed peace; then the usual revolt broke out, this time in Syria, but was soon suppressed; and in sundry expeditions against the Franks Bers Bey was entirely successful. He conquered the island of Cyprus, and obliged its Christian king, John III., to become his vassal. This John afterwards hired from the Sultan of Egypt a band of his Moslem Mamelukes, with which to make war on other Christian princes. The fame of the terrible Mamelukes was well known in Europe, and the Grand Master of the Knights of St. John was sent as an ambassador to the Court of Egypt to prevail on the Sultan to recall his soldiers. The usual arguments prevailed, and Bers Bey received a larger sum of money to recall the Mamelukes than John had paid him to send them. But John of Cyprus forthwith put himself under the protection of the rival Saracen power, the Ottoman Sultan Murad II., who, though his recent siege of Constantinople had proved fruitless, was becoming year by year

more powerful, to the danger alike of the Christian empire in Europe and the Moslem empire in Egypt and Syria.

Murad tried different arguments in favour of John of Cyprus. He sent a peremptory message by his ambassador to the Court of Egypt that Bers Bey would refuse at his peril the Mamelukes which he had promised, and Bers Bey forthwith dismissed the Knight Commander (it does not say that he returned the money) and sent the Mamelukes.

In 1427 (A.H. 830) the Patriarch Gabriel died, and for some months the affairs of the Church were administered by a monk of the convent of Toura, named Michael. Indeed, Makrizi says that he was actually elected Patriarch, and deposed by the Christians, but his name is not given in either of the Christian lists as Patriarch. No doubt there was a strong party in favour of the election of a monk, but the great body of the Church prevailed in favour of a man named John (by the Arabs Abu-l-Farag), who was well known and greatly beloved, the priest in charge of an important school at Maks.

In 1429 (A.H. 832) a very curious plot was discovered, according to Makrizi; nothing less than a secret treaty between the Emperor of Abyssinia and 'the Franks' to engage in a holy war for the extermination of the Moslem religion and empire all over the world! At the same moment the Emperor of Abyssinia was to attack the kingdom of Egypt and Syria by land, and the Franks were to invade her by sea. The agent and ambassador between Abyssinia and Europe was a Christian merchant disguised as a Moslem. This man made his way through the ruined Soudan to Egypt, and thence embarked at an African port for Europe. He carried out his negotiations with 'the Franks' successfully, even to settling the uniform which

was to be worn by every soldier in the Crusade—a garment embroidered with the Cross and 'the name of Haty[1] written in letters of gold.' But on his return to Alexandria he was betrayed by a slave, seized before he left his vessel, and brought before the Sultan. Two Abyssinian monks were with him and a great number of the embroidered garments.

The unfortunate merchant was tried by the Moslem Kadis and sentenced to death. He was first placed upon a camel and solemnly paraded through the streets of Boulac, Cairo, and Fostat, preceded by a man who cried aloud: 'Thus shall it be done to all who would furnish arms to our enemies, and who possess two religions.' After this he was beheaded near the College of Saleh, in the sight of an immense crowd. The non-return of his ambassador apparently caused the collapse of the Emperor's intended Crusade.

Bers Bey died in 1438 (A.H. 841) after the unusually long reign—for a Mameluke Sultan—of sixteen years. Under his strong hand Egypt enjoyed a brief respite from misgovernment, and learned men like Makrizi, who lived all through this reign, were protected and encouraged. It is even recorded that in his time the streets of Cairo were lighted at night and safe from scenes of riot and bloodshed! As usual, however, his son had barely reigned three months before a revolt of the Mameluke Emirs placed one of their number, Seyf-ed-din Jakmak, who had been Atabek, on the throne. Jakmak was already sixty-nine years old, and though he managed to maintain his hold upon the throne, he did not, fortunately for Egypt, engage in fresh wars.

It was in the year after his accession, 1439, that the Council of Florence was held, which for a brief period

[1] The name of the Emperor of Abyssinia.

reunited the Greek and Roman Churches. The Egyptian Church also sent a delegate, John, abbot of the celebrated monastery of St. Anthony; but he arrived late, and the Greek delegates had already left the place. John obtained the insertion of a decree for the admission of his National Church into the great reunion at a later session. But the Greek Church repudiated the terms to which their delegates had consented at the Council of Florence; and in Egypt the attempt at reunion appears to have had no practical effect beyond the establishment of a kindlier feeling between the Churches.[1]

In 1440 a terrible pestilence ravaged Egypt, but beyond this little occurred to mark the reign of Jakmak, who abdicated in favour of his son, Fakr-ed-din Osman, in 1453 (A.H. 857), the year in which the Greek Empire of Byzantium finally perished, and the reigning Ottoman Sultan, Mahomed II., took possession of the ancient stronghold of Christendom. Jakmak's son was deposed by the Emirs before two months were over; an old Mameluke named Inal was elected Sultan by them, and reigned ingloriously for about eight years. In the first year of his reign the Egyptian Patriarch died, and was succeeded by a man named Matthew, of whom little is known. Inal received an embassy from the King of Abyssinia commending the

[1] This temporary reunion is represented by Roman Catholic historians as the solemn submission of the Coptic Church to the Pope of Rome, 'under whom she has remained ever since.' But, if so, the Roman Pope could not possibly have acknowledged, as he did, a rival Patriarch in the same see, that of Alexandria. It was not, however, a submission, but only a righteous attempt at reconciliation, which failed in consequence of the extravagant pretensions of the Roman Pope to supreme authority. It was this which caused the Council to be rejected indignantly by the Greeks, and ignored in Egypt, when the terms of the reunion were made known to both those countries.

Christians of Egypt, whom he had been persecuting, to his favourable notice. It is evident that Egypt was miserably misgoverned during his reign. We learn that in 1458 the Mameluke Emirs repeatedly set fire to various parts of the cities—probably those quarters inhabited chiefly by Jews and Christians—in order to create opportunities for plunder. Inal's son was allowed to succeed him, but was deposed after a nominal reign of four months.

After him a Greek slave who had belonged to Bers Bey and risen to eminence among the Mamelukes was elected Sultan in the year 1461 (A.H. 865). Unlike the Turkish and Circassian slaves who had attained the throne, Kochkadam endeared himself to the Egyptians by his kindly government and courteous manners. The six years of his rule are reckoned among the golden days of which this unhappy country has known so few. Even during this happy period the Mameluke Emirs broke loose on one occasion and plundered the bazaars of the Christian quarters in the misnamed 'Old Cairo.' But during his reign European pilgrims were not afraid to visit the holy places of Egypt, particularly Heliopolis and the balsam gardens of Materieh. There is still extant an account of a later pilgrimage of some Germans in 1483, when Kait Bey was on the throne, in which they say that the Sultan had enclosed the sacred fountain and tree in the garden of his own palace built at Heliopolis, but that they were permitted to enter and visit the sacred spots. They declare that one of the most remarkable sights in the palace garden was a bath where three hundred people could bathe at once. It was probably something like the one now in the gardens of Shoubra Palace. In 1466 the Patriarch Matthew died, and was succeeded by Gabriel VI.

In the same year died the Greek Sultan, and 'all Egypt bewailed him as their father.' Two other Mamelukes who succeeded him were severally deposed after barely two months' reign of the ordinary plundering and brutal kind, which the six years of Greek rule had made appear more unbearable than ever; and at length a freed slave of Sultan Jakmak, whose nationality is not stated, was called to the vacant throne.

This man was Kait Bey, whose beautiful tomb has made him one of the best-known Mameluke Sultans. He came to the throne in 1468, and reigned nearly thirty years, most of them spent in fighting against the growing Ottoman power, which was so soon to overthrow the Mameluke rule in Egypt. But the first six years were passed in peace, and even during the constant wars which followed Egypt suffered comparatively little, as they were all carried on in Syria and Asia Minor. One of his greatest generals was an Emir called Ezbeki, who gave his name to a mosque which he built in commemoration of his Syrian victories, and to the open space or Meidan surrounding it. The mosque is gone, but the once waste space is still known as the Ezbekieh in modern Cairo. The Christians were not specially persecuted in this reign, and were still employed as architects of the mosques and colleges in Cairo. Kait Bey outlived two Patriarchal reigns. In 1475 Gabriel died, and was succeeded by Michael VI., and in 1481 the latter was succeeded by John XII.; but little has yet been discovered about either of these Patriarchs.[1]

[1] In 1484 the monks of Deyr Antonius and Deyr Paulus were all massacred, and the monasteries abandoned for 80 years. During this time the greater part of the ancient library was used for fuel by wandering Bedouins.

After some years of fighting, with varying fortunes, peace was concluded between the Ottoman and Egyptian Sultans in the year 1491 (A.H. 896), and the cities of Tarsus and Adanah were ceded to the Ottomans. Kait Bey lived five years longer, and governed Egypt well. He built a mosque, which still stands, though in a greatly neglected condition, not very far from the much older mosque of Ebn Touloun; and which, like his tomb, is called after his name. In 1496 (A.H. 901) he died, and his son was permitted to succeed him. But six months of ferocious tyranny, which did not even spare the Emirs, sealed his fate, and they deposed him in favour of one of his father's slaves, named Kansu, who, after six months of a hopeless struggle to restore order, voluntarily abdicated the throne. Kait Bey's son was given another trial, and bore the name of Sultan for some eighteen months.

In January, 1499, he was murdered by the Mameluke Emirs, and three other Sultans rapidly succeeded him. Each in turn was elected by the Mamelukes; the first two were deposed, the third was murdered by the Emirs, who seem since the death of Kait Bey to have thrown off all restraint. After the murder of Tuman, however, the third of these Sultans, in 1501, the outraged Egyptians for once insisted on taking the matter into their own hands. They deputed the principal Moslem Sheikhs to elect a Sultan, and the popular feeling both in Egypt and Syria was so strong that the Mamelukes did not venture to oppose it, but associated themselves with the Sheikhs and accepted their choice.

The Sheikhs did not venture to suggest anyone but a Mameluke Emir for the post; and made choice of an old slave who had belonged to Kait Bey, of the name of

Kansu el Ghuri. He was without ambition, had taken no share in the intrigues and faction fights of the other Emirs, but since he had obtained his freedom had lived a quiet life and shown himself considerate and kind to all who were dependent on him.

All the Emirs were struck with astonishment at the selection, none more so than El Ghuri himself, who at once refused the perilous honour, declaring that he was more accustomed to obey than to command. But the whole assembly were unanimous in declaring that they would accept no other sovereign than himself. El Ghuri therefore consented, exacting a solemn oath from them that if they were dissatisfied with his government there should be no rebellion or murder, but that he should be permitted to retire into private life unharmed.

Kansu el Ghuri took the throne in 1501 (A.H. 906), and reigned more than fifteen years. He enforced order, even among the Emirs, with a strong hand; he carried out important public works in Egypt, and founded schools and mosques; but in order to do this, as well as undertake the wars which became necessary for the defence of Egypt, he burdened the country with excessive taxation, the onus of which, as usual, fell most heavily on the Christians. Among his mosques the one which bears his name is still one of the show-places in Cairo, and forms a most picturesque feature in the great street which, under different names, runs across Cairo at right angles to the Mouski.

El Ghuri had to reckon with a fresh European enemy, the Portuguese, whose establishment in India seriously injured the commerce of that country with Egypt, and who were also interfering in Abyssinia.[1] El Ghuri fitted

[1] In 1502 Peter Martyr visited the Sultan of Egypt, sent by Ferdinand and Isabella of Arragon.

out a fleet to protect his commerce from the Portuguese, and in 1508 he gained a victory over them off the coast of Beluchistan; but in the following year his fleet was driven back to Egypt in a shattered condition. El Ghuri fitted out a fresh fleet to return to India, but a more serious danger called his attention to the defence of Egypt itself.

In 1512 (A.H. 918) the two sons of Bajazyd, the Ottoman Sultan, being engaged in the usual struggle for the possession of the throne on the death of their father, the unsuccessful candidate took refuge in Egypt and implored the help of El Ghuri. The Egyptian Sultan, well aware of the danger which the growing power and ambition of the Ottoman Sultans threatened to his own country, received Kurkoud with friendship, and consented to aid him against his brother, who was now reigning at Constantinople under the title of Selim I. He lent him twenty warships with which to attack Constantinople; but on the way they fell in with the Crusading fleet of the Knights of St. John, and were defeated and captured. The only effect, therefore, of El Ghuri's attempt was to arouse the bitter enmity of the rival whom he had hoped to crush. He hastily entered into alliance with the King of Persia, who was already at war with the Ottoman Sultan; but the combined armies were cut to pieces, and El Ghuri sent an embassy to Selim to ask for peace 'on such terms as the Ottoman Porte might choose to impose.'

His submission came too late. Selim rejected his ambassadors with scorn, and bade their master prepare for war, since he proposed to visit him in Cairo. El Ghuri assembled all his Mameluke regiments, and marched to meet the Ottoman horde before it could enter Syria. The armies met near Aleppo, but it was clear from the

outset that the Egyptian cause was hopeless. Not only was the Ottoman army composed of the Janissaries, who, like the Mamelukes, were European slaves bought and trained for the sole purpose of war, but all the resources of the recent science which had invented gunpowder were brought into play by the Ottomans against the lances, arrows, and scimitars of the Egyptians. The artillery struck such terror into the Mameluke Emirs who commanded the right and left wings of the Egyptian army that they deserted to the enemy. El Ghuri, attempting to rally his troops, fell from his charger, and was crushed under the horse-hoofs of his flying Mamelukes.

The slave-dynasties were over in Egypt. A nephew of El Ghuri, Tuman Bey II., was indeed hastily elected to succeed him ; but though for a few months he gallantly upheld the uneven conflict, it was with the knowledge that he was doomed to fail, and would die fighting. Even this mournful satisfaction was denied him. He had purchased eighty guns from the Venetians, but the Mamelukes were inexperienced in their use, and the Ottomans were still incomparably better armed. It was on January 23, 1517 (A.H. 922), that the final battle was fought on Egyptian soil, and the Mamelukes entirely routed. Such of them as were left, with Tuman Bey at their head, threw themselves into Cairo, and expected the approach of the Bedouin tribes, whose alliance Tuman Bey had hired. Before their arrival Selim had already entrenched himself in the island of Rhoda, and the attack on his stronghold was repulsed with loss. Cairo was barricaded and the citadel fortified, but it was taken by storm—though the Mamelukes disputed every inch of the ground till the city was paved with corpses—the towns of Cairo

and Fostat pillaged and burnt, and every Mameluke of the garrison slain. Tuman Bey, who had not yet found the soldier's death which he courted, embarked almost alone on the Nile, and made his way to Alexandria, where he hoped to make a fresh stand. But he fell into the hands of the Bedouin tribes, who sold him to the Ottoman Sultan.

Selim's conduct was marked by the usual cruelty and absence of chivalrous feeling which distinguishes Turkish warfare. He affected at first to receive his gallant foe with courtesy and consideration, and kept him in an honourable imprisonment until he had learned all that Tuman Bey could tell him about Egypt, its government, and its resources. Then, at the close of their final conference, he coolly ordered his guards to take the prisoner away and hang him. The last Mameluke Sultan was accordingly hung like a common criminal at the Bab Zawilah, and the unhappy kingdom of Egypt passed under a new form of tyranny, no better and in many respects worse than that of the Mamelukes; for the Mameluke Sultans, bad as most of them were, had at least some personal interest in the country of which they had usurped the government.

Henceforth Egypt was the prey of successive governors whose one idea was usually how soonest to enrich themselves before their inevitable recall to Constantinople and loss of the Sultan's favour, while the real power fell more and more into the hands of the tyrant Mameluke Beys.

CHAPTER XXXIII

FROM BAD TO WORSE

1517 THREE days after the murder of the last Mameluke Sultan,
1233 Selim I. made his triumphal entry into Cairo, in April
923 1517. The Mameluke Emirs came in and made their submission for the most part, but he barely waited for this before starting to secure the important city of Alexandria. As usual, the bulk of the population took little interest in the change of masters, and Selim had no popular insurrection to fear. The Egyptians rejoiced in their deliverance from the Mameluke tyranny, and probably few among them were far-sighted enough to see that the Ottoman yoke must needs press more heavily still. Alexandria submitted without striking a blow, and Selim went back to Cairo to reorganise the Government before himself returning to Constantinople—or Stamboul, as the Greek name became on Oriental lips.

He began by an act of tyranny which secured for himself a pre-eminent title to Moslem loyalty. The Abbaside Kaliphs still lived in Cairo under the protection of the Mameluke Sultans, and exercised a real though undefined jurisdiction over the Moslem world, in much the same manner as the present Pope of Rome reigns over the Roman Catholic world. But Selim was not inclined to admit any superior to himself, whether spiritual or

temporal. He forced the reigning Kaliph, who was a prisoner in his hands, to abdicate in his favour all his authority and the rights pertaining to his office, as well as the office itself. It was publicly proclaimed that henceforth the Ottoman Sultan was also the legitimate Kaliph, sole lord, both spiritual and temporal, of the Moslem world.

The traitor Khayr Bey, who had been the first to desert to the Ottoman side at the critical moment of the great battle, was rewarded by being made the first viceroy—or, as this official was called, the Pasha of Egypt. But Selim had no intention of leaving any Emir in such a position that he might, with some hope of success, attempt to secure the kingdom for himself.

The Pasha was to be a living figure-head, the representative of the dignity and grandeur of the Sultan, and his mouthpiece; but over the army he had no control, nor could he do anything without the consent of a Privy Council composed of the Aghas (or commanders) of the six regiments. This council had a right to suspend the execution of any order he might give, while the question was referred to Constantinople, and even to depose him if they had any reason to suspect him of treachery. The commander-in-chief of the six regiments (or Odjaks) which composed the new army of occupation resided in the citadel, but was little more than a state prisoner as far as his personal liberty was concerned, since during the whole term of his command he was strictly forbidden to leave the citadel. The first man appointed was Khayr-eddin, one of Selim's principal generals and a stranger to Egypt. Of the six regiments under his command, only one was formed out of the Egyptian Mamelukes; but

Selim's successor added a seventh, which was also composed of those Mamelukes who consented to take service under the Ottoman Sultan. From among the Mameluke Emirs whose lives had been spared on their submission to the conquering Selim he chose twelve, who, with the title of Bey, were made governors of the twelve *sandjaklys* (or military districts) into which Egypt was divided.

These astute arrangements certainly succeeded in their object, which was to maintain the sovereignty in Egypt of the distant Sultan, but made no provision whatever for the good government of the country. The bulk of the population, whether Moslem or Christian, was worse off than ever, as they soon discovered—since, however the different military parties might disagree with one another, they all agreed in spoiling the Egyptians. The latter also suffered from a new form of injustice and tyranny at the hands of their latest conqueror. Up to this time the ancient arts and handicrafts of Egypt had never quite died out, and under the later European, as distinct from the Turkish, Mameluke Sultans, they had even been encouraged. Most of the beautiful work now to be seen in the mosques and churches of Egypt dates from the latter half of the thirteenth and the whole of the fourteenth century, during which the European Mamelukes reigned. As Christians, the Egyptians were relentlessly persecuted; as artists, as architects, as physicians, as illuminators and scribes, as wood-carvers, as embroiderers, as silk manufacturers—in short, as ministers in any form conducive to the luxury and beauty of life, they were tolerated, and, if they adopted the Moslem religion, encouraged and rewarded. At the time of the Ottoman conquest many no doubt of the artistic classes had become

Moslems, but Selim does not seem to have distinguished between the Moslem or Christian Copts in the wholesale order he gave for the forcible exportation of the best of these artists and artificers to Constantinople. So comprehensive were his directions, and so ruthlessly were they carried out, that even the Moslem eulogists of the Sultan admit that he caused the ruin of more than fifty different Egyptian industries.

The yearly tribute of Egypt was fixed at 600,000 piastres (about 6,150*l.*), in addition to a booty of a thousand camel-loads of gold and silver which Selim, according to a Moslem historian, took back with him to Constantinople. Selim only lived three years after his conquest of Egypt, and much still remained to be done by his son Suliman II., whose reign lasted nearly half a century. The latter created two deliberative assemblies in place of one, called the Great Divan and the Little Divan. He increased the number of the Mameluke Beys from twelve to twenty-four, and added another Mameluke regiment to the Egyptian army; but the radical change which he made was in the tenure of the land. In despair of ever understanding the fiscal system of Egypt, or its land tenure, he solved the difficulty by a comprehensive act of annexation. He published an edict declaring that he was himself the sole landowner of the whole country of Egypt.[1]

He then farmed out the districts to different men,

[1] This Suliman II. is held up by some Western historians, particularly by a modern English writer, as an instance of the superiority of the Moslems to the Christians whom they governed. Yet even his English apologist remarks that he was spared the usual fratricide because he had no brothers to slay, and admits that he slew anyone in cold blood without pretence of trial who happened to annoy him. Still, it is true that with all his faults Suliman II. was one of the best Moslem and Turkish Sultans.

who were called Mouletezzims, who had the right to sub-let their concessions. They paid the Sultan so much down, and collected as much more as they could from their subordinate officials, who did the same thing in their turn. The Sultan reserved to himself the right to revoke the concessions if he did not get as much money out of them as he expected. It will be seen that by this means a premium was put upon robbery and dishonesty of every description among the Government officials. From the Pasha, who was liable to be recalled at any day, down to the smallest collector of taxes, but one idea prevailed—to make as much money as possible during their brief and uncertain tenure of office. From the conquest of Egypt by Selim to the invasion of Napoleon in 1798—a period of 281 years—the Governor of Egypt was changed by order from Stamboul 119 times, not counting temporary revolts. Sometimes the same man was reappointed after the interval of a year or two; but for the most part they were all strangers, who regarded their office as a tiresome exile, only bearable because it was a speedy road to private wealth. Occasionally, as in the case of Daoud (or David) Pasha, ninth in the list, whose government lasted twelve years, the Pasha of Egypt chanced to be a man of learning and probity, who welcomed and used the opportunities which, even in her worst days, Egypt offered to the Oriental for study both of the arts and sciences. But this happened rarely; the average duration of the Pasha's government was from one to two years, and he was lucky if in the end he was permitted to retire with his ill-gotten gains. It not infrequently happened that the cupidity of the reigning Sultan was aroused, the outgoing Pasha was put to death on some pretext, and his wealth confiscated.

The third on the list, whose name is given by some authorities as Ahmed, and by some as Suliman, tried to make himself independent, and in the riots which were thus occasioned the archives of Egypt were burnt. The rebel was beheaded, and the rebellion met with no popular support.

The Ottoman Sultans appear to have favoured the Greek rather than the National Church in Egypt, and the Greek Patriarchs were consequently less afraid to reside there. At the time of the conquest the National Patriarch was John XII.; the Greek was Mark III. But nothing is known of either beyond their names, nor of their successors, John XIII. and Philotheus or Theophilus. All communication between the Egyptian Church and Abyssinia, which was also the scene of great revolutions at this time, was cut off. The Abyssinian Emperor was persuaded to accept an archbishop from the Portuguese settlers, a man named Joas Bermudez, who went to receive consecration from the Pope of Rome. The Pope not only ordained him Metropolitan of Abyssinia but *Patriarch of Alexandria*—an act of aggressive schism which, however, was simply ignored by both the Greek and Egyptian Churches in Egypt.[1] In 1526 John XIII. is said to have been succeeded by Gabriel VII.; but there is great uncertainty about the duration of the reign of John XIII., and some writers deny the fact of his existence. His name, however, is in the Christian lists, and without him we should be driven to conclude that the reigns of John XII. and Gabriel VII.

[1] This fact, however, entirely disposes of the Roman claims to an unbroken authority over the Coptic Church from the time of the Council of Florence to the present day. If the Patriarch of the Egyptian Church acknowledged the Pope's authority in Egypt, how could the latter possibly, without formal deposition, appoint another Patriarch of that Church?

covered between them the space of eighty-eight years,[1] which, considering that a Patriarch was always chosen in the prime of life, canonically not before he was fifty, seems incredible. It was probably John XIII. who ruled the Egyptian Church during the governorship of David Pasha, who governed well and devoted a good deal of his time to the collection of a valuable library.

After the death of David Pasha the country rapidly went from bad to worse. Brigandage increased to an alarming extent, and old roads became deserted. The last and the worst of the Pashas appointed by Sultan Suliman was a man named Mahmoud, who indulged his greed and cruelty without restraint, and was eventually as he rode through the streets fired at by an assassin hired to get rid of him. He fell mortally wounded, and, as the shot came from the direction of a walled garden, two innocent gardeners at work there were instantly beheaded by his guards, while the real murderer escaped. A riot was expected, and the shops were hastily shut; but the Emirs, some of whom were supposed to be responsible for the murder, calmed the people, and assured them that no further violence was intended. No one was concerned to revenge the death of the tyrant, and the Pasha who succeeded him was a welcome relief to the Egyptians, who for nearly eight years were left in comparative peace under three successive governors appointed by Sultan Selim II. The tyranny of the Mameluke Beys was always with them, but it was not till the last two years of Selim's reign that the increase of brigandage in Egypt became a scandal too great to be ignored.

The Soudanese kingdoms had now ceased to exist.

[1] John XII. succeeded in 1481 Gabriel VII. died in 1569.

Most of the country groaned under the tyranny of irresponsible Arab slave dealers, but about this time a negro tribe overran the southern kingdom, elected a king or Sultan, and fixed their capital at Sennaar.

During the reigns of Suliman I. and Selim II. the country of Abyssinia was distracted by civil and religious war. King David, hopeless of success against his Mohammedan foes without European help, had allied himself with the Portuguese against them, at the price of submitting to receive his Patriarch from the Pope of Rome instead of from Alexandria. On the death of David, his son Claudius, who was but eighteen years of age, had continued the Portuguese alliance until the forces of the Moslem ruler of Adel had in a decisive battle been thoroughly routed. But as soon as the kingdom was comparatively at peace, Claudius, while he treated the Roman clergy with all honour, refused to acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope of Rome in his dominions, and sent an embassy to Gabriel VII., the Patriarch of the Egyptian Church, to ask that his true Spiritual Head would send him an Abuna. A priest named Joseph was accordingly consecrated, and received by the Abyssinians with great honour and rejoicing. Bermudez, finding that he had no chance of success in bringing over the Abyssinians to the Latin Church, left the country, and eventually returned to Portugal, where he wrote an account of his travels.

St. Ignatius Loyola was then at Rome, and his ardent soul burned to retrieve what seemed to him a disgraceful failure. He entreated the Pope to send him to Abyssinia; but the latter, whether fearing that his zeal would outrun his discretion, or unwilling to spare him, refused permission. He took upon himself, however, to consecrate another

ecclesiastic of the Latin Church, Nuno Barreto, Patriarch in the place of Bermudez, and two others as suffragan bishops in Abyssinia. These three sailed to Goa, where Barreto stayed, and only the two suffragans went on to Abyssinia. They were received by King Claudius with courteous hospitality as honoured guests, but he firmly, however politely, refused to acknowledge the jurisdiction of the Pope of Rome, and declared that he owed no obedience save to the Chair of St. Mark. The Roman Catholic emissaries were permitted to remain in the country, but the Abyssinians were full of zeal for their National Church, and they made no converts. Claudius occupied himself with rebuilding and restoring the churches which had been overthrown by the Mohammedans in the late war. One which he rebuilt received the nick-name of the 'Mountain of Gold,' from the splendour of the materials employed in its construction.

As soon as the Moslems had recovered from their late defeat they again invaded Abyssinia, and Claudius, as before, marched against them in person. But the omens were against him, and the superstitious Abyssinians, seized with panic, fled at the first fire. Claudius, left alone with twenty of his own cavaliers and eighteen Portuguese musketeers, was surrounded by the Moslems, and, after selling their lives as dearly as possible, they were destroyed to a man. The king had no less than twenty wounds; but, notwithstanding the gallantry which would have moved the admiration of an honourable foe, his head was cut off and set up for the mockery of the Moslems for three years, till it was ransomed by an Armenian merchant and honourably buried at Antioch.

Claudius was succeeded by his brother Mena, or

Mennas, and he did not show the same courtesy towards the Roman ecclesiastics, who were extremely unpopular in the country. Indignant at the coldness and dislike of the king, and unmindful of the kindness they had received from his heroic brother, the Latin clergy, having 'converted' one of the principal Abyssinian noblemen, joined him in an alliance with the Moslems against his lawful and Christian sovereign. Mennas, however, marched against the rebels and their Moslem allies, and defeated them, but died, probably of his wounds, shortly afterwards, leaving the throne to his son Segued, a boy of twelve.

Either before or on the news of the defeat the Pope, who, it is charitable to conclude, was disgusted at the conduct of his missionaries, despatched an embassy to Gabriel, the Egyptian Patriarch. Gabriel received the ambassador, a Jesuit named Christopher Rodrigo, with courtesy and honour, but firmly refused to treat on any other basis than the perfect independence of his own National Church. Owing probably to his influence, however, the traitorous Latin ecclesiastics in Abyssinia were forgiven and permitted to reside in Abyssinia; but, having by their own act enlisted the feelings of every respectable Abyssinian against them, they made no progress whatever, and reported that the conversion of Abyssinia could only be effected by the sword. The Regent of Portugal eventually persuaded Pope Pius to recall his clergy, and so ended the first Portuguese mission to Abyssinia.

CHAPTER XXXIV

INFLUENCE OF THE REFORMATION IN EGYPT

574 290 82 THE first Governor of Egypt appointed under Sultan Murad III. in 1574 (A.H. 982) was Messih Pasha el Khadam, who had been treasurer at the Court of Constantinople. He retained his office for five years, and put down brigandage in Egypt with a strong hand. It is recorded that during those five years he put to death nearly ten thousand people, 'for the most part criminals.' He was a stern but apparently a just ruler, and, instead of using the unfortunate country as a mere stepping-stone to private wealth, he refused even the bribes which were offered to him. He was a good Moslem, and added to the number of mosques in Cairo.

With his successor, however, Hassan Pasha el Khadam, the old system returned in full force, and money was exacted with such shameless rapacity that the Sultan interfered. Hassan was recalled, and left Cairo under cover of the night by the way of the tombs for fear of popular vengeance; while his successor, Ibrahim Pasha, was bidden to institute a searching inquiry into his proceedings. The wholesale robbery which was brought to light, not only of every Egyptian official with whom the ex-governor had come in contact, but of the Sultan himself—among other things it was proved that he had stolen from the

public treasury 100,442 *ardebs* of corn and sold them for his own profit—justified the Sultan's suspicions. He had the ex-governor strangled, and confiscated to his own use all the riches which Hassan had heaped up.

Ibrahim Pasha took the unusual step of making a visit of inspection throughout Egypt. He even travelled to the southern deserts, and made his way to the long-deserted emerald mines. They had been left unworked for more than two hundred years, but Ibrahim brought back a great number of the gems. Having thus thoroughly examined the country he applied for a recall, and returned to Constantinople.

After this brief respite Egypt again became a prey to plunder and anarchy, and an earthquake in 1583 added to its calamities. In 1584 (A.H. 997) open rebellion broke out among the Mameluke Emirs, and, though partly crushed, Egypt was more or less in a state of civil war between the Mamelukes and the adherents of the Ottoman Government for ten years. At the end of this time the revolt once more assumed formidable proportions; the Pasha in office took refuge in the citadel, and the soldiery wreaked their vengeance on the peaceable inhabitants of the town, among whom, as usual, the Christians suffered most.

During these years the Pope of Rome made fresh attempts to get the Egyptian Church to acknowledge his authority. In 1583 he prevailed so far that the Coptic Patriarch, John XIV., summoned a council of bishops at Babylon to hear the arguments of the Papal Legates and consider their proposals. The deliberations were stormy, for, as usual, the feeling of the whole Church was against any such surrender. But the personal influence of the

aged Patriarch,[1] who longed for peace and was ready to sacrifice his own dignity, prevailed so far upon the council that decrees in conformity with the suggestions of the Papal Legates were drawn up. They were, however, never signed, for in the night the Patriarch died suddenly,[2] and the council broke up in confusion. The Moslem Government arrested the Papal Legates as foreign spies, and threw them into a dungeon. Unwelcome as their presence had been to the Egyptians, their sense of hospitality could not permit them to acquiesce in this solution of their difficulty. Between them the richer Copts raised a ransom of five thousand pieces of gold, which was afterwards honourably repaid by the Pope, and the Papal Legates were set free to return to their own country.[3]

The same story repeats itself again and again: rapacity and tyranny exercised by successive governors until a mutiny either killed them or caused the recall of the Pasha, but exposed the law-abiding classes, and particularly the Copts, to fresh outrage. In 1602 Ali Pasha carried his cruelty to such an extent that, according to the Moslem historians, he never went out without

[1] John, of course, was actuated by the belief that if he submitted to the Pope on the easy terms demanded, the Egyptian Christians would secure an efficient protector.

[2] Roman Catholic historians suggest that John was poisoned, but there is no ground for the supposition.

[3] Baronius, the Roman historian, declares that John's successor made that submission to Rome which his predecessor had intended, and even gives a letter purporting to have been written by Gabriel VIII., besides asserting that the reunion was accepted by the whole Egyptian Church in January 1595. But in all this Baronius was deceived, and the account in his annals was shown to be entirely false.

killing at least ten people on frivolous pretexts. In his time the misery of the country was augmented by a terrible famine, and afterwards by one of the most destructive pestilences ever known in Egypt. A man who lived near one of the gates of the town told Shamseed-din, the historian, that he had seen more than 300 corpses pass out by that gate alone in one day. The Pasha at last issued an order forbidding the ceremonial burial of the dead, and, in order to escape the contagion himself, he left Cairo to the charge of an Emir who died shortly afterwards, and did not return even to appoint another deputy.

In this year (1602) both the Patriarchs died, but whether of the plague or no is not stated; it is probable in the case of Gabriel VIII., but not likely so far as Meletius Piga, the Greek Patriarch, is concerned. The plague does not seem to have been so violent at Alexandria, where Meletius Piga spent his time when he came to Egypt, and where he died. He was, like so many of the Greek (or Melkite) Patriarchs in Egypt, a foreigner: Cretan by birth, and Exarch of the Church of Constantinople, as well as Patriarch of Alexandria. He had come to study in Alexandria about the year 1574, and was ordained priest by the Patriarch Silvester, who preceded him. He succeeded so well in Alexandria that he sent to Crete for a little boy who was related to him in some way, and who was afterwards celebrated as Cyril Lucar. Cyril, however, was not educated wholly in Alexandria, but was sent for some years to Venice, and returned to Alexandria when his kinsman was elected Patriarch in the room of Silvester. It was during the vacancy between the death of Silvester and the appointment of

Meletius that the Council of Constantinople was held (in 1591) which sanctioned the creation of a new and independent Patriarchate, resident at Moscow, for the kingdom of Russia.

While Meletius Piga ruled the Greek Church in Egypt, Cyril Lucar travelled for some years in Europe. He certainly visited Italy, Geneva, and Holland, and, it is believed, England also, but the evidence on this last point is doubtful. He was very much struck by the state of religious faith and worship which he found in these countries, where the influence of the Reformation was then at its height; and being, like all patriotic members of the Greek Church, bitterly opposed to the pretensions of Rome, and, unlike most of his co-religionists, conscious that even his own Church stood in need of reform, he was deeply influenced in his own faith by what he saw and learned. But he returned to Alexandria still true to his own Church, and was shortly after ordained priest by Meletius Piga, and went with him to Constantinople. After a year's residence there he was despatched on a difficult and unsuccessful mission to Poland; and later he was sent to Crete, and to Constantinople again. It seems to have been on this occasion that he here made friends with Monsieur von Haga and acquired a still further bias towards the tenets of Calvinism.

This was the man who was chosen to succeed Meletius Piga after the famine and pestilence of the year 1602. His election was not unopposed, but his known wealth and learning prevailed against the vague suspicions of his want of orthodoxy. Contrary to the prevailing practice of the Greek Patriarchs in Egypt, he at once took up his residence in the country, and for ten years

he governed well, endeavouring to reform abuses and yet remain loyal to the Church of his ancestors. The English traveller Sandys, who visited Egypt in 1611 and made friends with Cyril, was much impressed by his learning and high character. At that time, on the same testimony, Cyril had a just conception of the importance of the English Church as the only national Church which had achieved reformation without self-destruction, and considered that the points of difference between the English and the Eastern Churches were of no vital importance. Unfortunately, he does not seem to have been equally ready to extend the right hand of Christian fellowship to the long-suffering National Church.

Whilst the Greek Church in Egypt since the Ottoman conquest had been favoured by the dominant race and her position improved in consequence, the Egyptian Church was now almost at its lowest ebb. Poor and ignorant, servile from long centuries of brutal oppression and persecution, despised by the Moslems as infidels and by the Greek Christians as heretics, they were regarded with bitter jealousy by both—by the Moslems because their still superior learning and probity made it impossible to dispense with them in the Government, and because neither party ever forgot that the Copts were the old dominant race; and by the Greek Christians because of their incontestably superior claims to be considered the National Church of Egypt. Nothing can excuse Cyril's conduct in rejecting all overtures of friendship on the part of the Egyptian Patriarchs (of whom two were contemporary with him) or his obstinate refusal to acquaint himself with the most obvious facts concerning them,[1] and his supercilious

[1] In a letter written to one of his Calvinist friends he describes the

contempt for their ignorance of European learning and customs. His own clergy, except the few who had been educated abroad, were in equal ignorance of the Western world, and learning of any kind was at a low ebb in both Churches.

All this time negotiations had been carried on between the Pope of Rome and successive Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church. Gregory XIII. had written to John XIV. to invite him to enter the Roman communion, and John's answer was returned to Gregory's successor, Sixtus V. The same overtures were made by Clement VIII. of Rome to Gabriel VIII., and the Oriental courtesy of the Egyptian Patriarch led the Pope of Rome to imagine for a time that he had succeeded in his efforts—so much so that Baronius included in his annals an account of the conversion of the Copts, much to the amusement of those who knew the circumstances in Egypt. When Mark V. succeeded to the Patriarchal throne, the same negotiations were carried on; and the Romans believe to this day that the Coptic Church would have joined the Roman communion in a body if Mark had not been suddenly and arbitrarily deposed by the Pasha of the year in Egypt. But as a matter of fact, even in her deepest misery, the Egyptian Church has clung fast to her ancient independence; and though desirous of intercommunion in

Copts and the Jacobites as if they were two different religious sects, and identifies the latter with the *Nestorians*! In fact, he shows such deplorable ignorance of everything connected with them that Neale for some time doubted the genuineness of the letter, on the ground that such ignorance on the part of the Patriarch of Alexandria was impossible. It may, however, be paralleled any day in our enlightened century by the ignorance of some English Churchmen, who are now governing the same land of Egypt, and are responsible as Christians for the attitude they assume towards her National Church.

earlier years with both the Roman and Greek Churches, as of late with the Greek and English Churches, she has always maintained that no foreign Pope or potentate of any rank or nation whatever could exercise jurisdiction over the National Church of Egypt.

In 1604 the proceedings of the Roman Catholic missionaries in Abyssinia again attracted the attention of the Egyptian Patriarch. Four years before this time a Jesuit named Pedro Paez had set out for that country; and though imprisoned on his first arrival at Massowah he was afterwards set at liberty and permitted to reside in Abyssinia. Ever since he had lived in great retirement at Fremona, applying himself to so diligent a study of the Abyssinian language that, it was said, he could both speak and write it better than any native of the country. The fame of this learned man penetrated to the Court of Za Denghel, who had succeeded Segued, and the king sent to request him to come and give a specimen of his powers. Paez gladly accepted the challenge, confounded the native priests by his rapid arguments in their own language, and was allowed to preach a sermon before the king.

Carried away by his eloquence, the king declared himself ready to embrace the Roman Catholic faith, and many of his courtiers followed his example. But the nation indignantly rose against the king in defence of their National Church, the Abuna excommunicated him, and in the first battle the king was defeated and slain.

Two claimants for the throne, both of the royal family and ancient faith, presented themselves; and after a contest Shenouda (whose name is written Socinios by some historians, and who also took the name of Seltam Segued) was proclaimed emperor.

Paez was permitted to remain in the country, and being a true Jesuit, learned, tactful, zealous, and unscrupulous of means to an end, he soon acquired the same influence over the new king. Again in this attempt to force a foreign form of Christianity on the ignorant but steadfast Abyssinians the country was plunged into civil war. It became known that an embassy was about to be sent into Italy to notify the submission of Shenouda and the kingdom of Abyssinia to the see of Rome. Once more the Abuna published a solemn anathema of the Roman Catholic errors; once more the people took up arms in defence of their old religion and independence. This time the Emperor was victorious, but again and again the people broke out into fresh rebellion. At length, when one after another had been crushed, Shenouda openly embraced the Roman Catholic faith. Pedro Paez, whose personal character stands very high, died soon afterwards, in 1623, no doubt in the full belief that he had done well in ruining by civil war the Christian country which had given him hospitality.

CHAPTER XXXV

EGYPT IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

A.D. 1603
A.M. 1319
A.H. 1012

In 1603 (A.H. 1012) Sultan Mohammed III. died, and was succeeded by Ahmed I. A new governor was at the same time sent into Egypt, named Ibrahim, who endeavoured to restrain the excesses of the soldiery, but was murdered by them in consequence after a few months. His successor was sent out with stringent orders, and having promised an amnesty if the actual murderers were given up, he succeeded in getting them into his hands. They were beheaded, but his promises were not strictly kept. In the seven months of his term of office he beheaded 200 of the most troublesome Emirs and Beys, and established among them a wholesome terror, which rendered the street-fights and mutinous outbreaks less common.

In January 1609 a new and more serious mutiny broke out under a governor named Mohammed, who is remarkable for the facts that he made no enemies in Egypt except the troops whose habits of brigandage and rapine he had endeavoured to restrain; that he maintained his post for more than four years, and resigned it without disgrace or dismissal. He had for two years been governor when the troops, who found themselves required to be content with their pay, instead of levying forced

contributions at their pleasure on the unfortunate Fellaheen, whether Moslem or Christian, rose in revolt. The principal Emirs and Beys of the army met together and swore solemnly to overthrow the Ottoman power and restore the good old times when a Mameluke was above all law except the will of his particular military chief. They elected one of their number Sultan, another was named Wuzir, and they portioned out Egypt into various districts, with the avowed intention of living on the plunder of the districts assigned to them. But even among the Mamelukes and Janissaries there were some who refused to rise against a good governor, and who responded to an appeal made to them by Mohammed Pasha in person. They marched out in pursuit of the rebels, and a pitched battle took place at Khankah. Seeing that the day was going against them, some of the rebellious Emirs deserted their comrades, and made peace with the Pasha by delivering to him twenty-three of their officers. Shortly afterwards the greater part of the force surrendered, and about fifty of the ringleaders were beheaded. No quarter was given to the rebels, and so many were afterwards captured and slain that at length the Kadi el Askar represented to the governor that it would be more politic to suspend the executions, and, when he had succeeded in arresting a sufficient number on promise of life, to send them instead into exile.

To this the Pasha consented, and eventually about three hundred Mamelukes, loaded with chains, were sent on camels to Suez, where they were put on board a ship bound for Yemen. The rest of his time this Pasha spent in endeavouring to lighten the burdens of the Egyptians, and to

diminish the number of Government pensions enjoyed by the idle 'upper classes.'

In 1613 (A.H. 1022) ten thousand Janissaries were landed in Egypt on their way to Yemen, where the governor was endeavouring to suppress a rebellion. and had asked for reinforcements. The Pasha of Egypt (Mohammed-el-Soufi) was required to furnish them with the necessary provisions and means of transport through the country, and sent for the principal officers of the contingent to settle the amounts due. The Janissaries coolly returned for answer that Egypt would suit them very well to live in, and that they had no intention of proceeding any farther. They seized by force that quarter of Cairo adjoining the Bab-el-Nasr and the Bab-el-Futeh, turning the lawful inhabitants into the streets, and proceeded to barricade the district so strongly that the Pasha found it necessary to proceed against them by a regular siege. Nor would he have succeeded even then, but that one of his captains made his way through the empty cistern of a school near the district and surprised the rebels within their barricades. The advantage was well followed up, but no attempt seems to have been made to punish the mutineers; they were given full pay, and merely required to leave the country and proceed to their original destination.

The Pasha was dismissed, and when, nearly three years afterwards, another army was sent through Egypt to Persia, it is proudly recorded that the transit was accomplished without harm to the population of Egypt! In the two following years, however, both Constantinople and Egypt were torn by internal dissensions and rebellions. One Sultan succeeded another,

only to be deposed in a few months; Pasha succeeded Pasha in Egypt, while the Egyptian Mamelukes openly defied the authority of either, and assassinations and street-fights resumed their sway.

In 1616 Cyril, the Patriarch of the Greek Church in Egypt, who had been absent some time in Europe, returned to his duties in Egypt. He had been more and more influenced in favour of the Calvinistic doctrines during his travels, and indeed was in disgrace for some time with his superior, the Patriarch of Constantinople; but a reconciliation had been effected before his return to Egypt. One of his first acts was to assemble the bishops of his own Church in Egypt, and anathematise solemnly the Roman Catholic missionaries who had by this time established themselves in the country.

It was not long, however, before Cyril became aware that his own clergy in Egypt were to the full as illiterate and as incapable of holding their own against the specially trained Roman intruders as the Copts whom he so much despised. Through the English ambassador at Constantinople he therefore made an application to the Archbishop of Canterbury (Abbot), and was invited by him to send a young priest to England, whom the archbishop undertook to educate and take charge of until he should be qualified to act as Cyril's right hand in Egypt. It may be interesting to insert Cyril's letter and the archbishop's reply :—

To the Most Blessed and Honourable the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all England and Metropolitan—one in many respects to be most highly honoured by me– let this letter, when arrived in Britain, be delivered with honour and fitting reverence ;

Cyril, by the Grace of God, Pope and Patriarch of the great city Alexandria and Œcumenical Judge.

I wish good health to your Worship, to the advantage and increase of the flock entrusted to you. Since we are now by the Grace of Christ returned to our Egypt, and enjoy peace in the Church, we are called upon to acquit ourselves of the promise made to your Blessedness in our former letters. Christ enjoys in no Church a profounder peace than in this of ours, since no strife nor contention respecting the Faith prevails amongst us, since the enemies of the Christian religion who are the most bitter and the most opposed (the Moslems) put a bridle on the tongues of those who would stir up such contentions.[1] By whom, it is true, we are vexed and tried in many ways : and yet, for the name of Christ which we bear in our mouths, and Whose marks we carry about with us, we are delighted to suffer affliction and vexation, and, if need be, to undergo the severest penalty, that by the trial our faith may shine more and more, and the glory of God may be manifested.

From such, then, we fear nothing : but rather from those dogs and deceitful workers, those hypocrites who say one thing and mean another, who are audacious enough to attack God Himself, if they may only by any means assist the tyranny of the Roman Pontiff.[1]

These emissaries exceedingly terrify us, and impose on our simplicity, and make use of many engines to bring us under their power, trusting chiefly in the show of erudition, and the thorny difficulties of the questions which they raise ; while we, meanwhile, labour under a want of learned men who can oppose these sophists on equal terms. For on account of our sins we have become the most contemptible of all nations, and with the overthrow of the Empire have lost the liberal arts.

It was continued meditation on this subject which induced me to open a communication with your Love, and to implore your

[1] These expressions refer to the Roman Catholic missionaries in Egypt.

counsel and assistance. But we received the greatest comfort from the reply of your Blessedness, by which, acting under the command of your king, you advised us to send some of our countrymen to study theology amongst you with diligence.

Here, then, is a Greek, by rank a Presbyter, possessing a good knowledge of Greek literature, a child of our Alexandrian Church, of noble birth, and talents prepared to receive deeper learning. We trust that the advances he will make will be such as need not to be repented of, if Divine Grace will breathe on him from Heaven, and your Blessedness will lend him an assisting hand.

And because you say that this plan is acceptable to the most serene King James the First, who is crowned by the hand of God, we ought to be grateful for his kindness, in which he makes a near approach to the pity and goodness of the Celestial King. In this he has fulfilled our expectations, as one whom God hath blessed from Heaven and enriched with the fullest gifts of His Grace, and by His special Providence committed to his care such and so large an Empire.

Therefore we first request your Blessedness to salute in our name, with the most profound reverence and with the most humble inclination of the body, His Most Gracious Majesty, to whom, from our very hearts, we desire long life and extended old age. Then we would ask him that, of his innate, and I had almost said immense goodness, he would allow some sparkle of his benevolence to shine on our Metrophanes.

Lastly, if anything be wanting in my letter with respect to the instruction or complete education of this man, this will easily be supplied by your prudence, which God has raised up and set forth as a shining torch in an exalted place, in order that you may be able to give consolation to others, not only to your Britons, but also to our Greek countrymen.

Farewell, most Blessed Father; may the Lord God grant

you a long and happy life, and at the same time supply you with strength in order that you may be enabled to bear the cares of the State and of the Church.

Egypt, March 1, 1616 (*i.e.* 1617).

Metrophanes reached England in safety, was well received by the king and the archbishop, and was sent to Oxford.

Abbot's reply was as follows:—

London, Nov. 17, 1617.

George Abbot, by Divine Providence Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all England and Metropolitan, to his Most Holy Lord and Brother,

Cyril, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria, and Œcumenical Judge, health in Christ.

There are many things which testify the sympathy existing between, and the sweet agreement enjoyed by, the members of the Universal Church; but at this time I feel it on this account especially, in that I am enabled to embrace with both arms your brotherhood, whom I have never seen face to face, though divided from me by many a league of land and sea, as if present; for the unity of faith binds each to each, and the common bond of love joins us by one and the selfsame Spirit, by Whom we extol Christ, Whom we both breathe: and we heartily congratulate you on the peace which your Church enjoys now, from your account disturbed by no schism or intestine commotion, and that external tranquillity which, if not altogether undisturbed, yet fills us with astonishment, which you enjoy among the bitter and determined enemies of the Christian name, according to that of the Royal Seer concerning Christ the King, 'Be Thou Ruler in the midst among Thine enemies.' We also request the congratulation of your piety on the manifold gifts of God poured out abundantly on the British Church. In which, to quote what your Chrysostom once said of our island, 'you may hear the people philosophising from Holy Scripture in a

strange tongue, but a familiar faith, using the language of barbarians, professing the faith of Saints.' For our people, devoted to the worship of Christ, is conversant in the clear light of the Gospel, and abundantly satisfies its thirst in the limpid streams of living water, without hindrance from any ; and this cannot be obtained in the Churches under the obedience of the Roman Pontiff. As to discipline, we differ from the other Churches which have been purged from the dregs of Popery ; we retain the most ancient form of Ecclesiastical rule, and the distinct orders of ministers. God, the Giver of all good things, preserve them to us for ever ; though we, after the depravity of our mind, have on account of our sins, and more especially the crime of ingratitude, deserved that our golden candlestick should be removed from its place, and ourselves entirely deprived of the light of Holy Scripture. We do not ascribe the good we have received to our own merits, for we have none ; but first to the Divine loving kindness, and next to the singular love wherewith He embraces the elect instrument of His glory, our most serene King James, who, heir both to the crown and to the religion of Elizabeth of pious memory, confirms them by his laws, and renders them illustrious by his example. For he not only is a diligent hearer of holy discourses, and a guest at the tremendous Table of the Lord, especially in the more solemn feasts ; but also, which is more than example and the greatest thing in this great monarch,

Qui tot sustineat, qui tanta negotia solus,

he discusses learnedly the most abstruse mysteries of the schools with the bishops best practised in the arena of Divinity. He has also written much and accurately on Theology, and his works have lately been given to the Press : they are well calculated to establish the Faith and to destroy errors, particularly those of the Romanists. I congratulate you on having obtained the entire friendship of such a King who, on the perusal of the letters of your Holiness to myself, salutes your Blessedness, and speaks of you in the most

flattering manner. And to give you a proof of his good-will, he has commanded me to receive your Metrophanes in a kind and friendly manner. I will cherish him as a pledge and surety of your love to me, and will gladly supply him with whatever is necessary or may be convenient. I have already planted this generous young shoot of a Grecian school in a pleasant garden, where he may flourish amongst us, and in good time bring forth fruit ; it is in the University of Oxford, where there is a most excellent library and seventeen colleges, and where a numerous race of learned men are supported at the public expense, as in a Prytanæum. Your Metrophanes is already entered on the books ; and when he has come to maturity, and brought forth fruit, then, as shall seem best to your prudence and be most for the advantage of your Church, he shall either take deep root amongst us, or be sent back to his native soil and there again planted.

I have only, Most Holy Brother, to ask that your piety will commend the British Church to God by continual prayer, as we shall intercede for that of Greece in like manner : that it, with the Divine Providence as with a wall, may be confirmed in peace and love ; and that it may be freed from these new emissaries who oppugn with their treachery alike Christian verity and Christian liberty. Among whom those pseudo-monks are chiefly to be avoided, now fresh from the potter's wheel, who arrogate to themselves the name of the Saviour,[1] who, professing to seek peace, throw all things into confusion, and desiring, as they profess, truth, teach equivocation, even where it involves perjury. The Great Shepherd of the sheep preserve His whole flock from these foxes and rapacious wolves ; and at the same time preserve your piety in peace and perpetual felicity.

Unfortunately, however, for the Greek Church in Egypt, a Dutch gentleman named David le Leu de Wilhem, who held strong Calvinistic tenets, spent some

[1] The Jesuits.

time travelling in Egypt, and acquired great influence over the mind of Cyril, so that he gradually renounced his faith in the teaching of his own Church while retaining his position as her ruler or head. Already in 1618 he writes to thank the Archbishop of Spalatro, immediately after the latter had left the Roman communion for the English Church, for a copy of 'De Republica Christiana,' which the archbishop had sent him, and the following extracts from his letter show his attitude of mind both towards the Roman and the Egyptian Churches. They also show how very far his personal opinions, here openly expressed, had diverged from the doctrines taught by his Church :—

I was ill and confined to my bed when your book and your letter were brought me. I instantly read the letter, and as soon as I understood what the book was, what the argument, and who was the author, I called for the work, took it in my hands, and did not desist from its perusal until the visit of my physician put a stop to it. The physician came and felt my pulse ; I handed to him the book, for he is a Romanist by religion. What did he say ? Does your Holiness wish to hear ? Nothing else than the general accusation of the Romanists, that it was the refusal of the dignity of the Cardinalate, for which you were anxious, that caused you to fall into your apostasy ! As if it were apostasy to obey sincerity and liberty of conscience, and no longer to tolerate the ambition and delusions of the Roman Pontiff. . . . This one thing I consider a fault, that your prudence, misled by Baronius, took that Alexandrian illusion for a real embassy.[1] It was nothing in the world but the imposture of some Copt or Eutychian who went to Rome and gave himself out for a Legate of the Patriarch of Alexandria. Before the discovery

[1] It was in the time of Gabriel VIII. that this supposed embassy was sent to Rome.

of the trick, the flatterers of Clement wrote and preached wonders of this Legation, as if the time were at hand when the whole world should be one Fold under the Roman Pontiff. But on the creation of Paul and detection of the fraud the Legate was secretly banished from Rome, lest the farce should be discovered, and returned to Egypt. . . . The case was the same in that history of the Russian Bishops, of which I might speak, because I was then Nuncio from Alexandria in Poland, the Legate of Constantinople being my colleague, and was present among the whole nation of the Russians in the Council of Brzesc, assembled against those very bishops who had been to Rome, unless it were useless to waste time and to abuse your patience by entering into the deceits, wiles, and stratagems of the Romanists. . . . There was a time, when we were bewitched, before we understood what was the very pure Word of God ; and although we did not communicate with the Roman Pontiff, nor receive him for what he gave himself out, namely, the Head of the Church, yet we believed that except in some matters of little moment in which the Greek Church differs from the Latin, the dogmas of the Roman Communion were true ; and we abominated the doctrine of the Reformed Churches as opposed to the Faith, in good truth not knowing what we abominated. But when it pleased the merciful God to enlighten us, and to give us understanding of our former error, we began to reflect what it was our duty to do : and as it is the part of a good citizen in any sedition to defend the juster cause, much more did I think it the duty of a good Christian not to dissimulate his sentiments in matters pertaining to salvation, but ingenuously to embrace that side which is most consentaneous to the Word of God. What then did I do ? Having obtained, through the kindness of friends, some writings of Evangelical Doctors, which the East have not only never seen, but, through the influence of the censures of Rome, never even heard of, I invoked earnestly the assistance of the Holy Ghost, and for three years compared the doctrines of the Greek and Latin

Churches with that of the Reformed. I left the Fathers, and took for my guide Scripture and the 'Analogy of Faith' alone. At length, through the Grace of God, because I discovered that the cause of the Reformers was the more just and more in accordance with the doctrine of Christ, I embraced it. I can no longer endure to hear men say that the comments of human tradition are of equal weight with Holy Scripture. As for Image worship, it is impossible to say how pernicious under present circumstances it is. God is my witness that I deplore the present state of the East, because I can see no method by which this ugly and shameful wound can be healed. Not that I think that images are, absolutely speaking, to be condemned, since when not adored they cannot occasion any mischief; but I abhor the idolatry which they cause to these blind worshippers. And although in my private prayers I have sometimes observed that the Crucifix was an assistance to my mind, as bringing more readily before it the act itself of the Passion, yet because I see that the vulgar, not to say it of some who are wise enough in their own opinions, are carried away from the true and spiritual worship and *latria* which is due to God alone, I had rather that all would entirely abstain from this so perilous handle of sin, rather than that by ignorantly violating God's law they should stumble on the rock of offence, and condemn themselves eternally. As for invocations of Saints, time was when I did not perceive how they eclipsed the glory of our Lord Christ, and I obstinately defended them by two works against the learned Transylvanian Marcus Fuxia. But in his answer he so completely refuted my arguments that I had need of no other book to prove my error; and now I call the Lord to witness that in reciting the Public Office it gives me the greatest pain to hear the Saints invoked circumstantially, to the dereliction of Jesus Christ and the great detriment of souls.

At first Cyril's views seem to have been those of the English Church, but the influence of his friend, M. de

Wilhem, led him to become a follower of Calvin and to despair of reforming his own Church, in which he soon ceased to take any interest. Doubtless the more devout among its members regarded their Patriarch as a heretic foreigner, and the opportunity of giving new life to the Greek Church in Egypt was lost. The Egyptian Church was no better, and a new heresy at this time appeared of a more serious nature, since it was practical and not speculative. The morals of the Egyptian Christians had suffered greatly from long association with the Moslems, and it had often been necessary for the bishops to protest against concubinage in one form or another. But now for the first time one of the bishops (of Damietta) openly declared that polygamy, which is *not* forbidden in the New Testament, was better than fornication or adultery, and preached in favour of permitting the Christians to have more wives than one.

Finding that remonstrance had no effect, the Patriarch (Mark V.) excommunicated his bishop. If the latter had merely protested against the sentence, and endeavoured to defend his own opinions, it would be possible to consider him as a sincerely religious though much-mistaken man. But he took a course which deprived him of all claim to consideration. He used all his influence with one of those Copts who, as usual, held the offices of trust at Court, to revenge himself on his Patriarch; and the Moslem governor, a man named Jaaffa, welcomed the opportunity for humiliating the Christians. Mark was summoned before him, and so severely beaten that he died shortly afterwards.

To add to the miseries of Egypt, a terrible visitation of the plague decimated the population in the winter of

this year. Those who could, fled the country; among others, M. de Wilhem, who sent Cyril a pair of globes as a parting present. The Egyptian Church was without a head, and Cyril, though he did not actually fly the country, lost what little hold over his Church he still possessed by his conduct on this occasion. He writes, apparently without any comprehension of the fact that he was shirking a plain duty: 'They reckon up to this day (the spring of 1619) that four hundred thousand have died; and yet the corners, I might almost say the whole streets of this vast city are still full, and it does not seem as if one were wanting. I remained shut up with great danger in my house, and let down from my windows the answers which I had to make to my Christians respecting the dead; and by the grace of God am safe up to this time.'

It is stated by Shamse-ed-din that a rough account was kept of the shopkeepers and people employed in the bazaars who died of the plague, and that the numbers of deaths among these alone amounted to 635,000, 'without counting those who died in other places.'

During these sad times the Egyptians elected a new Patriarch, John XV., surnamed Melawani, who lived about nine years, but of whose government we have no record. The Pasha of the year after the plague was more than usually unjust and tyrannical, and the Nile flood was so high that it did great harm instead of good to the country, so that famine was added to the plague, which broke out again, though with less virulence.

In 1621 another revolution precipitated the Sultan Osman from the throne, and replaced Mustapha I. As usual, the Pasha of Egypt was changed, and the outgoing Pasha fled up the Nile, pursued by the soldiers of his

successor. Another revolution in a few months placed Murad IV. on the throne.

Between these two, in 1621, Cyril Lucar thankfully shook the Egyptian dust off his feet on his promotion to the Patriarchate of Constantinople. He was succeeded by Gerasimus, who was, like himself, a native of Crete, but who was firmly attached to the Eastern Church and had no sympathy with the Calvinists. On his arrival in Constantinople Cyril engaged in a struggle with the Jesuits, who were actively engaged in proselytising the members of his Church in that city, and published a pastoral decree commanding the faithful to withdraw from all communion with the members of the Latin Church. But he had under-estimated the strength of his enemy. The Jesuits determined to remove *him*, and bribed the Moslem Wuzir to exile Cyril[1] on some frivolous pretext to Rhodes. They even procured by unworthy means the election of the Archbishop of Adrianople to fill his place. This was made a personal matter between the Roman Pope and the English king. Urban VIII. wrote to thank and congratulate the French ambassador at Constantinople on the success of the Jesuits, while James I. wrote to the English ambassador to instruct him that Cyril Lucar was to be reinstated at whatever cost. In the end the English prevailed, and Cyril Lucar returned to his post. The Jesuits were unwilling to accept defeat, and the contest resolved itself into one of bribes. The melancholy history may be read at some length in Neale, but would be out of place here, since Cyril's personal connection with Egypt ceased when he resigned his Patriarchate there in November 1621. For seventeen years the Jesuits and the Greeks

[1] Chrysoculus is the authority for this statement.

outbid each other in bribes to the Moslem authorities, to whom the affair was as good as a handsome yearly annuity. Eventually the Jesuits contrived to secure not only Cyril's exile but his death warrant. The unfortunate prelate was strangled by the Moslems, on a small boat, out of sight of land, lest there should be any attempt at a rescue.

His pupil Metrophanes, whom the Archbishop of Canterbury supported for the five years of his education at Oxford, did not turn out so well as they had hoped, as the following letter from the archbishop will show :—

The Grecian Critopulus Metrophanes hath taken his journey very lately into France or Holland, pretending from thence to go by land to Constantinople. I bred him full five years in Oxford, with good allowance for diet, clothes, books, chamber, and other necessaries ; so that his expense, since his coming into England, doth amount almost to three hundred pounds. While he was in that University he carried himself well : and at Michaelmas last I sent for him to Lambeth, taking care that in a very good ship he might be conveyed with accommodation of all things by the way. But by the ill-counsel of somebody, he desired to go to the Court at Newmarket, that he might see the King before his departure. His Majesty used him well, but then he was put into a conceit that he might get something to buy him books to carry home to the Patriarch. The means that he gaped after were such as you can hardly believe : as first, that he should have a knight to be made for his sake ; and then, after that, a baronet, wherein a projector should have shared with him ; after that the king was to be moved to give the advowson of a benefice, which a false simoniacal person did promise to buy of him. I caused my chaplain to dissuade him from these things, and interposed my own censure in it, as thinking these courses to be unfit, unwise, and unworthy. But, to satisfy

his desire, I bought him new out of the shop many of the best Greek authors, and among them Chrysostom's eight tomes. I furnished him also with other books of worth, in Latin and in English ; so that I may boldly say it was a present fit for me to send to the Patriarch of Constantinople. In the meantime, since Michaelmas last, I lodged him in my own house ; I sat him at my own table, I clothed him, and provided all conveniences for him, and would once again have sent him away in a good ship, that he might safely have returned, but he fell into the company of certain Greeks, with whom we have been much troubled with collections and otherwise ; and although I knew them to be counterfeits and vagabonds (as sundry times you have written unto me), yet I could not keep my man within doors, but he must be abroad with them, to the expense of his time and money. In brief, writing a kind of epistle unto me that he would rather lose his books, suffer imprisonment, and loss of life, than go home in any ship ; but that he would see the parts of Christendom, and better his experience that way, I found that he meant to turn rogue and beggar, and more I cannot tell what ; and thereupon I gave him ten pounds in his purse, and leaving him to Sir Paul Pindar's care, at my removing to Croydon about a fortnight since, I dismissed him. I had heard before of the baseness and slavishness of that nation, but I could never have believed that any creature in human shape, having learning and such education as he hath had here, could after so many years have been so far from any ingenuity or any grateful respect. But he must take his fortune, and I will learn by him to entreat so well no more of his fashion. Only I have thus at large acquainted you with the unworthy carriage of this fellow, which, though it be indecent in him, yet for the Patriarch's sake I grudge it not unto him.

Croydon, August 12, 1622.

However, apparently about the year 1626, Metrophanes returned to Constantinople, and was warmly re-

ceived by Cyril, who was satisfied with a very imperfect explanation of his lingering nearly four years on his way. Ten years afterwards, when Gerasimus retired into a monastery, Metrophanes was appointed Patriarch of the Greek Church in Egypt in his stead, but only survived his elevation about two years.

During the first half of this century a new Roman Catholic mission was despatched to Abyssinia, and again plunged the country into all the horrors of civil war, since almost their only convert was the king. They prevailed upon him to decree the immediate reception, on pain of death, of the Roman Catholic religion; the nation once more took up arms in defence of her National Church, and the war was carried on with the utmost bitterness for six years. At the end of that time the king died, and his son and successor at once threw off the Papal yoke, announced the re-establishment of the ancient faith, and sent to Egypt for a Metropolitan. The Roman missionaries were at first allowed to remain in the country; but when it was found that they were trying to bring in Portuguese troops, to re-establish the Roman faith by force of arms, they were kindly but firmly bidden by Facilidas the king to leave the country. Instead of doing so, they joined with an Abyssinian nobleman, who was still in rebellion against his sovereign, but he sold them to the Turks. The chief among them managed to raise money for his own ransom; the others, though pardoned by Facilidas, who endeavoured to procure their release, fell victims to the fury of the mob. Facilidas then forbade the entrance of any Roman missionaries into his kingdom, and nine Capuchins, who later made an attempt to do so, fell victims to their zeal. But Abyssinia never really recovered the miseries brought

upon her by more than a century of civil war. Such was the only result of the perpetual endeavours of the Roman Pontiffs during that time to impose their yoke on this race of ignorant but loyal mountaineers.

Under Murad IV. (1623 to 1640) and the eight Pashas who ruled Egypt in his name, we have the same monotonous list of exactions, revolutions, and calamities. The best of these governors was Khalil; the worst was Hussein. The former exacted no more than his dues from the people, did his best to keep the troops in order, and repressed the brigandage which was yearly making Egypt more unsafe. In return he was dismissed before two years were out, all his goods were confiscated by the Sultan, and he was sent into exile, only two slaves being permitted to accompany him.

Hussein brought with him a large number of Druses, who were permitted to terrorise and fleece the unarmed population on their own account. There was no law in Egypt in his time but the irresponsible will of the Pasha; and, in addition to all his other acts of injustice, he paralysed trade by falsifying the currency, and put to death in the two years of his stay 12,000 persons without trial, 'not counting those whom he killed with his own hand.' Another Pasha, whose tyranny lasted three years, devoted himself especially to injuring the trade of Egypt, and imposed a new and arbitrary tax on the silk weavers which nearly ruined their industry. There were at this time about seventeen thousand silk weavers in the three towns Cairo, Embaba, and Gizeh, most of whom were probably Christians.[1]

[1] Shamse-ed-din has some interesting remarks in his twelfth and thirteenth chapters on the industries and products of Egypt at this

During this time John XV. died, and was succeeded by Matthew III., while the Patriarch of the Greek Church was changed twice. To Gerasimus succeeded that Metrophanes who had been educated in England; and after his death, in 1638, he was replaced by a man who took the name of Nicephorus.

The accession of Sultan Ibrahim brought no change for the better. Under his first Pasha, Mustapha, brigandage increased to such an extent that even the towns were not safe, and hardly a night passed without one or more daring robberies being committed in Cairo itself, so that some quarters became deserted by the inhabitants. When the brigands were arrested, which occasionally happened, they paid a certain proportion of their ill-gotten gains in backsheesh to the authorities, and were immediately set at liberty.

Since the conquest of Egypt by the Ottomans the outbreaks of plague had also become more frequent and severe.[1] In 1642 it broke out again with greater fury than ever.

time. He remarks that the long-famous balsam gardens of Egypt had now quite disappeared, and that the balsam used by the chemist and physician was brought from the Hejaz. The beautiful linen manufactures of Assiut were also ruined, but a good deal was still made in the Fayoum, and the finer kinds of embroidered stuff at Akhmin; the cultivation of the vine lingered in some districts, and Egypt was still famous for its honey. He says in the year 1035 (A.D. 1625) the Egyptian taxes produced eighteen hundred thousand dinars, of which only six hundred thousand were sent as tribute to Constantinople, *the rest served for the support of Mecca and Medina and the payment of the troops!* This sum, he says, is independent of the revenue which the Beyler Bey (or Pasha of Egypt) collected for himself. It will be observed that public works or the maintenance of any arrangement for the well-being of the people are not so much as mentioned in this estimate.

[1] The plague of Egypt may be described as 'hunger fever.' It always breaks out after famine or a long period of under-feeding, and rarely attacks well-nourished persons.

It began at Boulac, in November 1642, and did not cease its ravages till May 1643. In no less than two hundred and thirty villages of Egypt every soul perished, and Shamse-ed-din reckons that in three months about eighteen hundred thousand burials took place in Cairo. But even if he includes, as he certainly intends to do, the five towns of Babylon, Fostat, Masr, Cairo, and Boulac in the term Cairo, this still seems an outrageous exaggeration, since the entire population of the same districts is less than six hundred thousand at the present day.

Owing to the terrible oppression and calamities of the last sixty years a number of the Egyptians, and particularly of the Christians, who were always the worst off, had been reduced to slavery. A number of Christian slaves had also been acquired in the constant wars of the Sultans, and these were employed in forced labour for the Government. Much excitement was caused in Egypt in January 1644 (A.H. 1053), by the daring escape of a number of these Christians. They were employed in shipbuilding at Alexandria, and, wishing to launch a newly built vessel, the governor called up all the slaves at work near, to the number of 600, and was compelled to order their chains to be taken off, as it was impossible otherwise to achieve the work. Instantly about 150 of them, probably Europeans, sprang together and turned upon the Moslems, who did not venture to oppose them. They forced the door of the arsenal, secured arms, marched deliberately into Alexandria, and helped themselves to everything they wanted from the shops; then, returning to the harbour, they seized one of the vessels in port and sailed away, without the loss of a man. The rest of the 600 appear to have escaped into the country

before the Moslems recovered themselves sufficiently to take any action.

This might have led to reprisals on the Christians of Egypt had not the attention of the authorities been almost immediately distracted by new and more serious outbreaks among the Mameluke troops, which were not repressed for more than a year, and then only for a time. The same story is repeated year after year during the seventeenth century—the Mamelukes constantly breaking loose from all control in street-fights and robberies of the unfortunate and unarmed Egyptians; the industries of the country oppressed and overtaxed till most of them perished altogether. The military Beys of the provinces were so many petty, irresponsible tyrants, since the constantly changing Pashas dared not interfere with them, and thought only of how soon they could amass a fortune by squeezing the natives, and how best, having done so, they could manage to retain it after their dismissal. In 1650 (A.H. 1060) the Nile was so low that a famine was the result, and the Pasha of the year seized this occasion to augment the taxes, while he sent to the Sultan only two-thirds of the yearly tribute, with the excuse of the great scarcity.

In the year 1660 (A.H. 1071) the Egyptian Patriarch died, and was succeeded by Matthew IV. It was in the time of this Patriarch that the Dominican missionary Vansleb came to Egypt. To him is due the credit of being the first foreigner since the time of the Arab conquest who took any trouble to make himself really acquainted with the history of the National Church of Egypt. As a Roman missionary it was, of course, particularly difficult for him to acquire information with any degree of

accuracy; and his book on the Coptic Church is of little value, though of much interest, considering the circumstances under which it was written. He falls into the usual mistake of attributing to the Copts an entire ignorance of their own language, and asserts that he conversed at Assiut with the last man who spoke Coptic. It is true that it was fast becoming a dead language at this time, but Coptic is at least as much a part of the education of a well-bred Copt as Latin or Greek is of an English gentleman. Nor can I discover that there has ever been a time when Coptic was not taught regularly in the Coptic schools, as it certainly is at this day.

There is still in existence a little book written about the middle of the seventeenth century by a Coptic Christian of 'Memphis,'[1] who is best known by his nickname of Abu Dakn, or 'Father of Beards.' We know very little about him, but he is stated to have been a man of high character, and his book is remarkable for its dispassionate tone, though it is evidently written to point out the differences of ritual and discipline between the Church of Egypt and the Church of Rome. He states that the members of the Egyptian Church were known in all other countries by the distinctive name of 'Christians of the girdle,' but does not seem aware that the origin of the name is most probably to be found in the early Moslem decree which obliged all Christians in Egypt to wear a girdle as a mark of humiliation.[2] He says that the Copts who served Moslems everywhere in Egypt enjoyed a certain amount of security and toleration, and were put on the same

[1] Probably Menouf-Memphis did not exist, and the two names are really the same.

[2] *See* p. 450, vol. i.

level with 'Greeks' and 'Papists.' He gives a brief account of the way in which the affairs of the Church are managed by the Patriarch and bishops, and then passes on to a description of her ritual and liturgy. We learn that in his time, as at the present day in Egypt, the sacraments of extreme unction and confession had fallen into disuse, and were administered only by special desire of the patient or the sinner. Baptism was still occasionally administered in the great tank or baptistery at the west end of the churches; and the babe was solemnly girdled with the distinctive belt by the priest, who removed and destroyed it after three days. The ceremony of the Urtass or Ghitas was still performed after the ancient manner.

Deacons must fast forty days before their ordination, and pay a fee of three dinars to the Patriarch. They were also solemnly girdled with a belt before the gate of the sanctuary on the occasion. A priest was supposed always to refuse ordination at first on account of his unworthiness, and to consent only on the command of the Patriarch.

Abu Dakn describes also the ceremonies and customs attendant on weddings, which were then still celebrated in the churches, though now it is common for the service to be read in the bridegroom's house—doubtless a custom which was first adopted for greater security.

The period of mourning for the dead is forty days, during which alms are given to the poor and masses said for the soul of the departed.

Abu Dakn observes that the Egyptians are far more ascetic than the European monks, since they are never allowed to eat flesh except at the two great festivals of the Church, and he claims for them that they are never idle.

Convents for women, he says, were only allowed in civilised towns and near churches. No one under the age of sixteen was allowed to fast.[1] He mentions also that every pilgrim going to Jerusalem paid two taxes to the Turks—one of eight crowns, and a second (probably on entering the Holy City) of four. He says that during some of the local pilgrimages to Egyptian shrines it was still the custom to bring offerings of animals, which they sacrificed and ate. But he remarks that no saints are of much account in Egypt unless their martyrdom dates from the persecution of Diocletian or earlier.

He mentions that if a priest happened to be one of the guests at any dinner, he was expected to take bread, break it, and give to each one a piece before anyone began to eat. He also states that the Egyptian Christians still engrossed the following trades—goldsmiths, jewellers, shoemakers, smiths, tailors, sculptors, and architects. In their schools he confesses that only reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, Arabic, Coptic, and a knowledge of the Scriptures are taught. It is evidently in his mind that the education of European children was superior, but for the seventeenth century in Egypt this does not seem to be a bad curriculum.

The Coptic original of Abu Dakn's book is probably still buried in some Oxford library, but by whom brought there we do not know. A Latin translation was published at Oxford in 1675, and a translation from the Latin into English was made by Sir E. Sadleir in 1693.

On May 6, 1694 (A.H. 1105), so terrible a storm raged in Cairo that all the people thought the end of the world

[1] Boys and girls considerably under this age fast at the present day, to the great detriment of their health.

had come.[1] The mosque of Ebn Touloun was seriously damaged, and several houses were entirely destroyed, while clouds of dust darkened the heavens. Violent storms are very rare in Egypt, and the circumstance made all the more impression on the Moslems because it burst upon them during the hour of prayer on a Friday in Ramadan. In the same year the Nile did not rise, and the consequent dearth found the country, as usual, wholly unprepared to meet it. For some months the famine grew worse and worse, till at length the attention of the rival Beys and Emirs was called for a moment from their daily quarrels and street-fights to the condition of the people by a popular insurrection. The starving mob surrounded the citadel, howling for bread; and as no notice was taken of them, they began to throw stones. Being chased away by the governor and his soldiers, they poured down into the town and broke into the Government magazines before they could be stopped. These were thoroughly cleared out, but the relief was only temporary, and the famine grew so sore that it is said some kept themselves alive by feeding on the bodies of the dead. A new Pasha (Ismail), who arrived during this famine, was moved with compassion for the grievous misery he beheld, and obliged the Emirs to undertake the charge each of a certain number of the starving poor of Cairo. In this he set the example, and distributed free rations of bread and vegetables twice a day while the famine lasted.

As usual, pestilence succeeded famine, and the people died about the streets in heaps. The Pasha, who was evidently extremely unlike most of his kind, undertook

[1] Rain was a rare occurrence in this century. M. de Maillet says that during three consecutive years of his stay not a single drop fell.

the burial of the pauper dead, and obliged the Emirs to follow his example. After the famine and pestilence had ceased he held a feast for the circumcision of his son, and with him a great number of children of the poor[1] were circumcised and clothed at the Pasha's expense.

In the last year of the seventeenth century died the historian commonly known by the nick-name of Shamse-ed-din (or 'Light of the Faith'). He was one of the most renowned teachers in Egypt, and wrote several other works besides his history of Egypt, which is only valuable for the century in which he lived.

[1] Gabbarti puts the number at 2,336 and M. de Maillet, who gives a lengthy description of the festivities, at 5,000!

CHAPTER XXXVI

M. DE MAILLET IN EGYPT

1694 1410 1106 At the close of the seventeenth century Mustapha II. was on the Ottoman throne, and the Pasha of Egypt for the time being was Ismail, but the real power was falling more and more into the hands of the Sheikh-el-Beled, as the Governor of Cairo was called by the native Egyptians. There were two great families, from one or other of whom this officer was generally chosen at this time, and between whom there was an open and deadly feud. All the Emirs and Beys of Egypt, whether holding commands in the army or not, ranged themselves on the side of one party or another, much as in the last days of the Byzantine dominion the whole country had more or less shared in the animosity between the Green and Blue factions. The two colours in the present case were white and red, and Gabbarti tells us that they carried party feeling so far that the adherents of one house would not permit the rival colour to be used on so much as a kitchen utensil belonging to them. Even the artisan classes of Egypt, who were already split into two divisions of their own, called the Sadites and the Haramites, took sides in the great quarrel —the former wearing the white colour of the Fikarites, and the latter the red of the Kassemites.

The original quarrel began between Kassem Bey, at

that time Sheikh-el-Beled (or Governor of Cairo), and Zulfikar Bey, who expected to succeed him in that dignity. Both the men were of Circassian origin, descended from a celebrated Mameluke, who on the conquest of Egypt by the Ottomans had barricaded himself in his house and remained there, according to the story, a voluntary prisoner for the rest of his days, refusing to acknowledge the new master. During the later years of the seventeenth century the strife between these rival parties often attained the dimensions of a civil war, and the monotonous record of riot, massacre, and robbery may be read at length in the pages of Gabbarti.

By the close of the seventeenth century the influx of Roman missionaries and European merchants introduced a new factor into the Egyptian world. The presence of a small but in some respects powerful body of free European settlers, who by virtue of 'the Capitulations' enjoyed a measure of security which no one attempted to obtain for the indigenous population, largely influenced the condition of affairs. The decrees which we now all refer to briefly as 'the Capitulations' are contained in a remarkable series of treaties between the early Ottoman Sultans and the principal Powers of Europe. The earliest of these date back to the fifteenth or sixteenth century,[1] and when Egypt became a part of the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century all such treaties and those subsequently agreed upon were held binding in the new addition to the Turkish dominion. Without such immunities it would have been absolutely impossible for any missionary or foreign trader to live in Egypt; it is only in our own century that the Capitulations have become so far-reaching and so much

[1] That with France was concluded in 1535.

abused that they are an actual hindrance to the progress of the country.

France and England were represented by their Consuls-General in Cairo as early as the beginning of the sixteenth century, and we owe to the French representative, M. de Maillet, who came to Egypt in 1692, an interesting account of the state of the country at the close of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries.

M. de Maillet was about thirty years old when he came to Egypt, and he represented King Louis for more than sixteen years in that country. He developed a keen interest in all things Egyptian, and even took the trouble to learn Arabic, though not Turkish, which was then more necessary for free communication with the 'upper' classes than it is now.

From M. de Maillet we learn that Cairo, Alexandria, Rosetta, and Damietta were all defenceless cities, at the prey of any serious invader. He says that the only town in Egypt still completely surrounded by its walls was Mansoura. Many of the great gates of Cairo still remained, but, as the line of connection between them seems to have been practically valueless, they were more like isolated fortresses than town gates. He estimates the population of Cairo in his day at 500,000, and thinks that the whole population of Egypt cannot amount to more than 4,000,000, giving the southern boundary town as Ibrim, which still held a garrison of twenty-five or thirty men. He mentions that of the two harbours of Alexandria Christian vessels were only allowed to use one, and that the most inconvenient, which was called the New Harbour. He speaks of the remains of ancient Alexandria with great admiration, particularly of a superb colonnade, much

of which still stood near the mosque (which was formerly the church) of Athanasius. He says that the sea was still receding so rapidly that a house which he visited on his arrival in 1692, then only thirty steps from the sea, he found in 1718 quite seventy steps from the sea, with other houses already built between.

Besides the obelisk still standing at Heliopolis, M. de Maillet speaks of a Sphinx which he saw there, almost covered with sand and broken by treasure-hunters, but originally, he says, of the same size as the Sphinx by the Pyramids of Gizeh, and hewn likewise from a single rock or stone. He tells us that one of the obelisks was still standing also at Matarieh, but that the celebrated balsam-trees had entirely perished.

It is evident that 300 years ago the remains of ancient palaces and buildings were to be seen in far greater number than at present, and that they were being daily destroyed. M. de Maillet tells us that a Janissary one day bought a piece of waste land to make a garden, and while levelling a hillock for that purpose he found that it concealed five splendid monolith columns. As they were far too large to be removed whole, the Janissary had them cut into sections, which he sold as millstones, the usual fate, M. de Maillet remarks, of all the largest of the ancient pillars, though as millstones they fetched at most 200 crowns, and any of the enlightened princes of Europe would be glad to give 2,000 for the pillars as they stood. Indeed, he is urgent that his Majesty should be asked to sanction the purchase and removal of the great column called Pompey's Pillar, at Alexandria, before it met with a like fate at the hands of the barbarous Turks.

Incidentally, we learn that even for the French Consul-

General an expedition to the Pyramids of Gizeh or Sakhara was not lightly undertaken. Notice was given beforehand to one of the Mameluke Beys, who sent his men in advance to secure the safety and comfort of the French representative. A good deal of digging went on in the great burial-ground between Sakhara and Gizeh, in the constant hope of finding treasure, everything else being destroyed. M. de Maillet describes at some length various figures, chiefly of wood, and mummies covered with hieroglyphics, which he himself saw brought from the tombs at Sakhara, and which were at once broken up to see if any gold had been concealed inside. He is careful, however, to distinguish between the Egyptians and the Turks in this respect, saying that the former, particularly the Christians, regarded such proceedings as sacrilege. But he seems to have had no scruple in using all the power of his official position to obtain from the Christians such of these antiquities as they had been able to save from the wholesale destruction of the Moslems. He particularises a statue which he forced a Copt to sell him much against his will, since it had been preserved in his family for nearly eight hundred years. Apparently M. de Maillet thought himself extremely virtuous in that he refrained from denouncing the unfortunate Copt to the Turkish Government, and so obtaining his coveted antique without even paying for it. The statue was that of a woman, the head and the feet of *pierre de touche noire*, the body *est en gaîne*, and made of verd antique variegated with white. The figure was about five feet five inches high and of great beauty. The despoiled Copt swore on the Gospel to the truth of the story he had told M. de Maillet concerning the statue: One of his ancestors, who was in service with

the Moslem ruler of his time—probably Shahin, Emir El Gyoush el Alfdal—was present when the latter opened one of the pyramids and found this statue inside. It was dragged out and forthwith condemned to be broken up, when the Christian, who, according to his descendant, believed the statue to be a representation of the Virgin Mary, entreated leave to ransom it, and was permitted to do so on payment of one hundred sequins. Since then it had remained in the same family, descending from father to son as a cherished heirloom, until fear lest a refusal should involve both the statue and themselves in a common destruction obliged them to yield it to the demand of the foreign Minister.

We also learn that several sarcophagi, hewn each out of one great block of stone or marble and covered with hieroglyphic writing, were lying about in different places in Cairo. One was used as the basin of a fountain, which was called the 'fountain of lovers.' Another served *à abreuver les chevaux* in the house of an officer of the Janissaries. M. de Maillet also gives a careful account of the principal fruits and other growths of Egypt, which seem to be much the same as at the present day, except that we find no mention of sugar-cane. A good date-tree, he assures us, would bring its owner a yearly revenue of 10*l.* sterling! Speaking of the different animals of the country, he mentions that the cat is still held in great favour by the Egyptians, and deserves to be, he considers, though he is not himself a lover of cats. But he declares that the Egyptian cat of 1700 was not only an excellent mouser, but invariably of great beauty, marked as regularly as a tiger, and would not be out of place in the Royal Menagerie. 'That which I do find ridiculous,' he adds,

'is that they still maintain homes or hospitals for the support of these animals.' He speaks of the crocodile as common near Gizeh, though rarely seen in the Delta; and mentions that some years before his arrival a hippopotamus was killed near Damietta.

M. de Maillet discusses at some length the question of cutting a Suez Canal, but decides finally that, though perfectly practicable, it would not be a profitable undertaking. The foreign trade of Egypt, he says, had diminished, owing to the maladministration of the country by the Turks, till there was little left except the slave trade, which had attained enormous proportions. All Turkey and Europe was supplied with negroes by way of Egypt—the Soudan having already degenerated into a desolated hunting-ground for the Arab trader—and an enormous number of white European slaves from the Turkish provinces were yearly imported in exchange. The least valuable of these, he says, is worth 200 crowns, and he had seen young girls valued at eight or nine thousand pounds. Boys, too, of good white blood were still in great demand to be trained as Mamelukes. Very few of these white slaves of either sex were really of Turkish blood, and most were of Christian parents, but all were called Turks and made Moslems. As all alike were of slave origin or parentage, it was considered no disgrace to have been a slave; on the contrary, the barbarous and illiterate Turkish ex-slaves were the aristocracy of the country, and the freeborn descendants of the Arabs or native Egyptians, in whom alone a scanty knowledge of the arts and sciences survived, were despised and looked down upon, even though they were Moslems. As ever, the Copts were the least ignorant and barbarous section of

the population; but M. de Maillet is too good a Catholic to have any toleration for the members of a heretic Church. He complains pathetically that in all the world there could be no other people so obstinate in error as these schismatics. The most skilful and zealous missionaries have now, he says, been labouring among them for years without result! He allows that the missionaries were politely received, that their zeal was respected, and their kindness gratefully accepted; but for all that, he says, there has not been one real conversion. At one time they tried the experiment of a free distribution of alms after their service to all the Copts who had attended, and by this means they acquired quite a large congregation of the poorer sort. But when a new Superior came out, who ordered the cessation of these indiscriminate alms, the congregation disappeared! On being reproached for their desertion they replied simply, 'No money—no church' (*Mafeesh felous—mafeesh kanisa*). A few remained with the Roman Catholics who had been educated by the Fathers from infancy, and it was clearly evident that only by this means could any breach be made in the National Church. It is curious that it never seems to have occurred to M. de Maillet or his co-religionists that the proper field for their labours was among the Moslems of the country. With the Roman and Presbyterian missionaries of the present day in Egypt, there is at least an understanding that their societies exist for the conversion of the Moslems, though their schools are chiefly filled with native Christians, drawn thither by the irresistible bait of free (or nearly free) education. In the time of M. de Maillet not even this tempting offer could seduce them from their own Church.

They have tried everything (M. de Maillet assures us), and the sole way of making a convert from the Copts is to take a child almost from the birth and separate him entirely from his own people. Some (he says) who were sent at an early age to Rome, and educated there for years, returned to their errors when they returned to their country, and only used the training they had received the better to defend their theological position. They hate us so (he adds), that when they wish to put the last insult on a man they call him a *Frank*. If you reason with them concerning the two natures of Jesus Christ, it is impossible to make them understand. You ask them, 'Was not our Lord perfect man?' and they reply, 'Yes.' You continue, 'Was He not also perfect God?' and they as readily reply 'Yes.' And yet nothing will induce them to allow two natures in Him.

It was not even easy, he complained, to obtain Coptic children from the birth, that they might be educated in the Catholic faith; for though these Christians were for the most part miserably poor and oppressed, nothing would induce them to part with their children. 'In 1699,' he writes, 'I received orders from the king to choose three Coptic children and send them to France for their education. The Court desired that these children should be of good family and their parents in easy circumstances.' He then proceeds to relate in detail the endeavours he made and all the resources he employed to obtain three such children for the king; and ends by saying that, so far from persuading anyone of good family to part with their children for such a purpose, though only for a few years, he had not succeeded in obtaining one, even among the most miserably poor. The very rumour that such an attempt was being made, he said, emptied all the mission schools, and the poor would not come for

their usual alms, not even those who were starving. M. de Maillet adds significantly that these facts will show how much reliance can be placed on the accounts of P. de Lobo, who had the hardihood to state that the Patriarch of the Copts gave permission to the Italian missionaries to take Coptic children to Rome for their education.

The Coptic Patriarch during the whole time of M. de Maillet's stay in Egypt was John XVI., and it is evident that he did not approve of the French and Italian missionaries any more than they did of him.[1] M. de Maillet speaks of a conference which he held with John on the subject of baptism, which, the French Consul-General had been horrified to find, was invariably postponed among the Copts until the mother was sufficiently recovered to attend the ceremony in church. It was often longer, since baptism was still administered, as a rule, on two occasions in the year, with great solemnity, in the different churches. The Patriarch, much to M. de Maillet's indignation, defended the Coptic practice, and told the Consul plainly that he did not consider the rite was administered with sufficient solemnity in the Roman Church. In particular he strongly disapproved of the prevalent practice among Roman Catholics of baptizing in private houses instead of in the church. With equal indignation the Frenchman records that circumcision was the rule among the Copts.

In speaking of the peculiar ceremonies in vogue among

[1] It was John XVI., surnamed John-el-Touki, who reintroduced the office of the consecration of the chrism, which had not been practised for 200 years. Neale says, on the authority of Bernati's account to Sokerius, that it was the same Patriarch who decreed that Coptic children should in future be baptized on the eighth and not on the fortieth day after birth. This, however, hardly agrees with M. de Maillet's account of his personal interview with John XVI. on the subject.

the Copts, M. de Maillet mentions one which is not found in any other account. He says that in the province of Behnesa, about two days' journey to the south of Cairo, there is a village which the Arabs call Bir-el-Gernous (or 'the Wells of Prophecy'). In this place the Copts have a sacred well, by which they can foretell the height of the yearly inundation. Every year, he says, on a particular night, a great tent is erected over this well, and the Sheikh (or governor) of the province comes himself to assist at the ceremony, accompanied by innumerable crowds.

With elaborate ritual a cotton cord, marked at regular intervals by threads of white and blue, is let down into the well, so that the end of it touches the water. Then a table is placed over the mouth of the well, and the bishop celebrates a solemn mass. When the mass is finished, the table is taken away and the cord examined. The height to which the water has penetrated the cord marks the height, as they firmly believe, to which the water will rise that year.

In spite of his prejudices, M. de Maillet cannot conceal a reluctant admiration for some of the works of the Copts. He says that among their great monasteries there is one, some seven or eight leagues south of Cairo, where there are three old churches built one above another, in such good repair that they are almost like new churches.[1] At this place the Psalms of David are chanted night and day without ceasing. But the great wonder of the place was at a short distance, in the mountain above the ruins of a still older monastery. Here, he says,

> . . . they have a promenade the most wonderful and splendid in the world. At some time they have cut a gallery right

[1] M. de Maillet says he saw this himself, but it seems almost certain that he never went farther south than Sakhara.

through the mountain, which is about twenty to thirty feet high, more than two hundred paces wide, and over three hundred paces long, the length running from west to east. From this exalted gallery, which is hewn out of the solid rock and has no sustaining pillars, the view extends far away to the Red Sea ; and two hundred monks can easily walk there at one time. In the hottest summer the air in this gallery is cool and fresh.

John XVI. consecrated two Abunas for Abyssinia, owing to the disturbed state of affairs in that country, which was still suffering greatly from the persistent efforts of the Roman Catholic missionaries to stir up civil war between the king and his people. Thus, in 1680, there were no less than three Abunas in Abyssinia—Abuna Christodulos, deposed by the late king in favour of a priest named Shenouda ; Abuna Shenouda, who was not properly consecrated in Egypt, and who was deposed by Yasouf in favour of Abuna Marcus, who did not receive official consecration from Egypt till 1692.

Three different embassies were sent from France to intrigue against the Egyptian Church in Abyssinia during the reign of the Patriarch John XVI., who died in 1718. The third and last of these attempts was in 1706, when the Jesuits persuaded Louis XIV. to send a physician named Du Roule into Abyssinia by way of the Soudan, to pave the way for their admission by the same route. But Du Roule[1] was detained three months, and finally murdered at the Court of the petty King of Senaar, who

[1] The subjoined letter from the Emperor of Abyssinia will partly explain Roule's fate. He was detained at Senaar while a messenger went to ascertain the will of the Emperor concerning him. We gather that with the letter to Du Roule came secret instructions to the effect that if Du Roule were a *bonâ fide* traveller he should be allowed to proceed, but that if he were a Jesuit he was to be prevented at any cost

still seems to have maintained a precarious sway over the southern kingdoms of the Soudan; though the northern kingdom had long since gone to wreck, and was now tyrannised over by a number of petty Moslem chiefs who were for the most part Arab slave traders. The King of Senaar professed the faith of Islam, but there were still

from entering Abyssinia. The letter is taken from M. de Sacy's 'Chrestomathie Arabe':—

'The Sultan Thekla Haïmanout, son of the Sultan Adam Segued, son of the Sultan Alaf (or Olaf) Segued.

'The present letter is addressed by the Venerable King, the Most Worthy Emperor, the Overlord of Nations, the Shadow of the Divinity amongst men, the Most Illustrious among the Sovereigns who profess the religion of Jesus, the Most Powerful among Christian Kings, he who is the Defender of the Faith; under whose protection are the frontiers of Alexandria; he who holds the standard of justice equally between the Mohammedan and the Christian; who is of the Israelites, of the line of the prophets David and Solomon, on whom was the Divine favour in the way of salvation. The Sultan Thekla Haïmanout, son of the Sultan Adam Segued, son of the Sultan Alaf Segued, may he be for ever blessed, may his most exalted empire be ever preserved and the chiefs also of his invincible army. Amen.

'To the most illustrious, much esteemed, and greatly learned Du Roule, Franco-Syrian; who comes to us in heart as in person, may he be preserved from all accident and raised to the highest rank. Amen.

'Your interpreter Elias, whom you have sent to us, has arrived at our Court; his arrival was agreeable to us, and we admitted him to our presence. We learnt from him that you had been sent to us by our brother the King of France, but that you have been detained at Senaar. In consequence I am writing to the Sultan Badi, that he should not retain you, but permit you to proceed; that, far from insulting you, he is to treat you with honour; that he is not to harass you, but treat both you and your company with all honour; that there is betwixt you and us the same faith and the same religion, like the Syrian Elias your messenger, and all those who come with you, be it as ambassadors or as traders, from our brother the King of France or his representative in Cairo. So he must treat all those who are united with us by the same dogmas, the same laws, and the same belief. For we love to enter into the bonds of friendship and union, and into reciprocal intercourse with all, save only those who profess dogmas and recognise laws

scattered Christian communities all through the Soudan, and several churches. His nominal sway must have reached nearly to the southern frontier of Egypt, as the following incident will show. On the murder of Du Roule, M. de Maillet published an official decree in Cairo commanding all French subjects in Egypt to dismiss every Berber or other subject of the King of Senaar from their houses within three days, and never to employ any such subject again, under penalty of being fined three hundred pounds! Considering that the Berberin were then, as now, the best domestic servants to be had in Egypt, the ordinance inflicted much greater injury on the subjects of the King of France than on the subjects of the King of Senaar; but the prohibition remained in force for about a hundred years.

M. de Maillet relates at some length the circumstances attending the apostasy and subsequent martyrdom of Father Clement Recollet, French Consular Chaplain in Cairo, which made a great sensation at the time. He was accused by his countrymen of malversation of charitable funds, and in a panic fled to the Turkish authorities at the citadel and declared his intention to embrace the faith of Islam. This happened on April 23, 1703. The

contrary to our own, such as Joseph and those of his society,* whom we instantly drove out from among us. Such people we will not admit into our country; they may not pass beyond Senaar, that they shall not be able to excite dissensions and disorders among us. For you, you are permitted to come to us, and are hereby assured of a favourable and gracious reception. Be therefore at ease, and fear not.'

Signed, and on the seal the following inscription: 'Jesus Son of Mary. Adam Segued son of Olaf Segued, descendant of Solomon son of David. Israelite.'

* This refers to the Jesuits. 'Joseph' is Father Brénedent, a missionary sent to Abyssinia, who perished before he reached Gondar.

next day M. de Maillet wrote the Father a long letter earnestly entreating him to return, assuring him that those who had slandered him should be punished, and adjuring him by all that he held most sacred to return while there was yet time. 'You can say you were drunk, and did not know what you were doing,' he suggests; 'at that price I can still deliver you out of their hands.'

The Father returned a short and unsatisfactory letter; yet on April 25, being brought before the Pasha, he declared that he was a Christian and would remain so. But the Moslems never allow anyone to retract. On the 28th he was circumcised by force, he was placed in splendid apartments with slaves to wait upon him, and assured that he should be married to the most beautiful women. But as he flung the turbans which they presented to him on the floor and persisted in his recantation, he was beaten and thrown half-dead into prison. M. de Maillet again endeavoured to obtain his release, but on May 8 he received a letter from the Father begging to be left to expiate his fault by martyrdom. It was proposed, indeed, by one zealous Moslem in full Divan that he should die by inches, one of his limbs being cut off at intervals of a quarter of an hour; but the Europeans were already too strong in the country for any such measures to be attempted against one of them. Indeed, the Pasha would have spared his life had he not feared the Moslem mob. In the end Father Clement was beheaded on Ascension Day, May 17, and the body was delivered to the French Consul and buried in the cemetery at Khandak. M. de Maillet adds that he received the warmest sympathy on this occasion both from the Greek and Egyptian Churches, and that a fast of three days was ordered by them in the martyr's honour.

M. de Maillet's relations with the Turks were evidently much more friendly than with the Copts, but he does not attempt to conceal his conviction that the former were solely responsible for the ruin and misery of the country. From the Pasha downwards no one thought of anything but how soonest to enrich themselves at the expense of Egypt, without regard to truth, justice, honesty, or mercy. The Pasha was rarely permitted to remain in office more than a year, though, by bribing the Sultan, some had managed to secure themselves for four. He contrived, however, always to acquire more for himself than the whole of the yearly tribute to the Sultan—'above all,' remarks M. de Maillet naïvely, 'when there is a pestilence in his year of office.' During the three or four months that it generally lasted the Pasha amassed an immense fortune. Whenever the Government tax-collector of a village died, the Pasha sold the office to the highest bidder; and sometimes the same office was sold three or four times in the same week, owing to the rapidly succeeding deaths of those who had purchased it.

Besides the Pasha, there were the five great military corps to prey upon the nation. No one who had any wealth to save, and was not prepared to fight for it, dared to carry on his business without putting himself under the protection of one or other of these corps, who were called respectively the Mustapha Agas, the Azabs (or Asaphs), the Spahis, the Bashawishes, and the Janissaries. But even so, when a man appealed to the chosen corps for whose protection he had paid so dearly in case of outrage or robbery, they took additional gifts on the pretence of inquiry and punishment which followed. Moreover, at the death of those who were under their protection they

claimed the right to administer the estate; and a comparatively small share was generally allotted to the widow and children, the rest went to the corps. They even managed, we are told, to extort money from the French in return for professing to ignore the relations which, M. de Maillet tells us, generally existed between them and one or more ladies of the country; but, we are told, their exactions on this score were becoming so heavy that even the bankers were beginning to think that they could not afford to continue their harems. No Turkish official, from the highest to the lowest, ever dreamed of applying any part of the revenues he collected to the development of Egyptian industries or to public works; though great sums were sent yearly to Mecca, as well as to the Sultan of Constantinople. The land was falling yearly out of cultivation; the embankments were kept in order by forced labour, if at all; roads were almost unknown; and the five corps who lived on the plunder of the nation did not even defend her from the predatory Bedouin.

Not even the most learned and religious of the Moslems were free from the savage spirit of their age. In 1709 a difference of opinion concerning the fittest successor to the office of Sheikh El Azhar became a bloody struggle, carried on for two days within the mosque itself. Each party brought arms and guns to settle the question; the doors and lamps were broken to pieces; a great number of the students were wounded, and many killed. At the close of the second day the Governor of Cairo brought down a force strong enough to overawe both parties, cleared the mosque, and gave orders that the corpses should be taken away. One Sheikh was sent into exile, and twelve other men who had taken part in the affair were imprisoned.

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE TYRANNY OF THE MAMELUKE BEYS

A.D. 1710
A.M. 1423
A.H. 1118

In 1710, war having broken out between Turkey and Russia, an order from the Sultan for soldiers relieved Egypt for a time of the presence of some three thousand of the detested army of occupation. But in Cairo the insubordination and quarrelling among those that were left increased more and more, and early in the next year civil war again declared itself. The Governor of Upper Egypt brought his troops down to take part in it, and a pitched battle was fought in the waste ground between the citadel and the mosque of Sultan Hassan. The mosque itself was turned into a fortress and strongly barricaded. Touloun and El Mowayid were also turned into forts. Indeed, the principal use of the finest mosques in Cairo at this time seems to have been as strongholds for the troops of the different Emirs.

The Governor of Upper Egypt was defeated, the Pasha who had favoured him was deposed by the Cairo Emirs, and the game went merrily on. Many Emirs' houses were set on fire by their opponents, and the flames spread to the private dwellings and shops of the peaceful inhabitants, till a good part of Cairo had been burned. Those which were not burned were sacked and pillaged indifferently by the soldiers of all the Emirs. All who

could, escaped from the town, which was left to the soldiers. Those who remained, in the hope of protecting their property, fell into the hands of a still more formidable foe—a tribe of Bedouin—who, being called to reinforce the ranks of the Fikarites, spread themselves over the town, stealing everything they could lay hands on, and cutting off the water-supply, so that all were like to die of thirst.

After the Bedouin had been called in, the strife was no longer confined to Cairo; nor could the Bedouin be withheld from plundering any town which might come in their way. Akhmin in particular was reduced to utter ruin, and many of the inhabitants killed. It was still almost entirely a Christian city, and this no doubt accounted for the attack upon it, since no other cause of offence is recorded. At length, in another pitched battle fought near Kasr-el-Ain, Iwaz,[1] the head of the Kassemite party, fell. The Governor of Upper Egypt, who led the rival army, had posted an ambuscade behind the piers of the great aqueduct, and by a simulated flight drew Iwaz Bey through one of the arches, where he was immediately set upon and killed. His son Ismail, a lad of sixteen, who was already renowned for his beauty and courage, was elected head of the Kassemites in his place, and a truce was agreed upon for three days. After this, hostilities recommenced with renewed bitterness, and lasted till the Fikarite party were, for the time being, utterly routed, and the youthful Ismail was left, in effect, master of Egypt. A new Pasha—indeed, several new Pashas, came from

[1] This name is more correctly spelt and pronounced Ouad, but it becomes Iwaz on Turkish lips, and lately an enterprising Syrian who wishes to be taken for an Englishman has turned it into Howard!

Constantinople in the next thirteen years; but for the most part of that time Ismail Bey was the real ruler of the country, and became the idol of the people. He obtained for his own friends the governorships of the different provinces and the principal state appointments in Cairo. He dealt a rough justice to all alike, cleared the neighbourhood of the towns of the plundering Bedouin, and for the first time in their lives the Egyptians of his generation found themselves in a state of comparative security. Even under the firm hand of Ismail Bey it was not safe for respectable women to go abroad without a strong escort. In the festival of Sham-en-Nassim of the year preceding his murder a group of women, following the immemorial custom of that day, rode out on donkeys to the suburbs of the town. When they reached a bridge over the canal a band of armed and drunken Mameluke retainers surrounded them, and, in full view of the officer on guard to preserve order in that quarter, tore off their veils and all their jewels and ornaments. When they had made off, the officer and his men came up—to console the women and escort them back in safety? Not at all! They deliberately stripped the women of everything they had left, and abandoned them absolutely naked, to entreat some charitable passer-by to fetch them the most necessary garments, that they might return to their homes.

But, as it turned out, these were not Christian or Jewish women, who could be thus outraged with impunity. They all belonged to Moslem families of high rank; hence the notice of the incident by the historian. On the morrow the insulted ladies appealed to the Pasha for redress, giving in a list of the diamonds and other jewels which had

been taken from them. The officer of the guard, with all his men, was brought before the Pasha, and two men, under threat of torture, corroborated the story of the ladies in every respect, but urged in their own defence that they had only obeyed the orders of their military superior. Other inhabitants of the quarter had looked on without venturing to interfere, but now that the rank of the victims was disclosed were eager to bear evidence. The men's excuse was accepted as sufficient; the officer was exiled to Aboukir and heavily fined.

Afterwards the Pasha made solemn proclamation throughout the city—*not* that anyone found guilty of assaulting defenceless women should be severely punished, but that no woman should be permitted to go outside the gates of the town or to ride on donkeys!

Ismail, however, did his best to put a stop to the open and shameless robbery carried on by the followers of the different military chiefs, and in many cases compelled restoration of the stolen goods. During Ramadan he kept open house after sunset for anyone who chose to come in and feast at his expense, and he electrified everyone by his courage in leaving Cairo to visit some of his friends in their different appointments in the provinces. No other Emir, it was said, would have dared to leave Cairo except at the head of an army, for fear of assassination.

A violent death in some form or other was, indeed, the ultimate fate of all the Mameluke Emirs, and Ismail Bey did not long escape it. Before he was thirty he was treacherously murdered by Zulfikar, the head of the Fikarite party. He left one daughter and two posthumous children by different wives, none of whom survived him

more than a few months. Ismail built two mosques—one at Dessouk, Sidi Ibrahim; and one at Melig, Sidi Ali—and restored the mosque of El Azhar in Cairo. He six times personally conducted the pilgrim caravan to Mecca, and his murder in 1723 was felt as a national calamity by all Egyptians.

In the same year a great sensation was caused in Cairo by the preaching of a Moslem reformer, a Turk by origin, who drew crowds to hear him in the mosque of El Mowayid. He inveighed against the abuses which had crept into the worship of Islam, and particularly against the worship of saints and the idea that relics of the dead could work miracles. The Sheikhs of El Azhar became alarmed, and put forth a declaration condemning the opinions of the preacher and solemnly affirming that the saints could work miracles after death. They called upon the Government to punish the preacher.

Some one took a copy of this declaration and brought it to the reformer while he was preaching. He declared he would challenge the Ulemas to a discussion before the Chief Kadi, and appealed to his hearers to stand by him. With loud cries the assembled crowd assured him of their fidelity, and, surrounded by about a thousand of them, he at once repaired tumultuously to the Kadi's house. This official, in great fear, tried to temporise with and dismiss them, but met with actual ill-treatment at the hands of the howling mob, and with difficulty escaped into the safety of his harem.

On the next Tuesday even greater crowds assembled in the mosque to hear the preacher, but he did not appear, and a rumour was circulated that the Kadi had prevented him by force. Again the crowd rushed to the tribunal,

seized the Kadi, and, on his denying all knowledge of their Sheikh, they dragged him before the Pasha, who appears to have equally lost his head. He signed a paper promising all that they desired, and the rescued Sheikh was borne in triumph to the mosque of Mowayid, where he delivered a most inflammatory address. Meanwhile the Pasha sent to the principal Emirs of the Fikarites and the Kassemites, declared that he had been insulted by the crowd, and should leave the country.

The Emirs were not slow to take up any quarrel. They called their dependents to arms, and marched down to arrest the preacher and his adherents; but the noise of their coming went before them, and when they reached the mosque they found no one. They swept through the town, arresting and bastinadoing all whom they could find, 'and thus the disorders ceased,' says Gabbarti. The preacher disappeared: some said that he was killed, and others that he had fled the country.

Early in June, 1734, some Christian visionary, whose name is not given, foretold that the world would come to an end in two days' time. Strangely enough, his prophecy met with instant and widespread belief among the Moslem Egyptians. From Cairo it spread, with that rapidity so often noticed among Orientals,[1] all through the provinces, and the people spoke of nothing else. Everyone bade farewell to his neighbour and set himself to prepare for the great catastrophe. All the poorer people rushed to the banks of the Nile to purify themselves by bathing in its waters. Some gave themselves

[1] In the old days this seems to have been effected by means of carrier-pigeons. It would be an interesting subject of inquiry how far the present pigeon establishments of Egypt are used for the same purpose.

up to feasting and enjoyment, some left their homes and wandered in the fields, some abandoned themselves to frantic terror, others to repentance and prayer. The Sheikhs and Emirs, though many of them doubtless shared in the common dread, endeavoured to reassure the people and persuade them to renew their daily avocations, saying that the news was doubtless false. But all their efforts were vain. 'It is only too true' was the invariable reply of the panic-struck people; 'the Copts and the Jews have said it, and who knew them ever mistaken in their predictions, since to them are known the secrets of prophecy and astrology?' They even adduced instances of the Christian prophecies which had been fulfilled in their own time; but what these were the Moslem historian does not record. The man who had uttered the prophecy was seized and brought before one of the Emirs, but he refused to recant what he had said. 'Throw me into prison until Friday,' he demanded; 'and if what I have said does not come to pass on that day, let me be slain.'

The terror and despair increased hourly. All Friday people waited for the end, and, as the hour of sunset drew near without any sign from Heaven, one of the Ulemas was seized with an inspiration of genius. The Christians had clearly been wrong for once; why not turn the failure to account? So he solemnly announced that Sidi Ahmed el Bedowi, Sidi el Dessouki, and Sidi el Shaffei (three of the principal Moslem saints) had interceded for them with the Almighty, and that, in consideration of the great merits of the holy dead, Allah had granted their prayer and had consented to adjourn the end of the world until a future date. And the people

blessed each other in thankfulness, saying, 'Brothers, we are still allowed to live. God grant that this respite may be useful to us.'

This happened in the Patriarchate of John XVII., who had succeeded Peter VI. in 1727, and who was succeeded in his turn by Mark VII.

After the death of Ismail the country relapsed into its normal condition of insecurity and strife. Zulfikar, who had murdered Ismail, was himself assassinated in a few years, and hardly a month passed without the assassination of one or more Emirs by each other. It was not uncommon for one Emir to invite another with his followers to his house, and then at a given signal cause his guests to be massacred by his own servants. A particularly disgraceful case of this kind happened in 1736, when eleven of the principal Emirs were murdered in the house of the Defterdar and by his order, because one of them, who was the chief at that time of the Fikarites, had refused to raise a Kassemite Mameluke to the dignity of a Sandjak. But one of the most powerful, Osman Bey Zulfikar, having made good his escape, the assassins feared reprisals and took refuge in the mosque of Sultan Hassan. They were refused admittance, but gained it by the simple expedient of burning the door down, and barricaded themselves in the mosque. This began another of the bloody struggles which hardly ever ceased during the eighteenth century; the mosques were again turned into forts, the houses of the rival parties were alternately sacked and pillaged, and the streets were strewn with corpses. The Pasha, as usual, was deposed, and a short interval of comparative peace followed, during which a pestilence broke out in the town. In one Emir's

household 123 of his following died, and the corpses were carried out to burial at night.

It was during this time of comparative security that Richard Pococke came to Egypt. The existence of the 'Capitulations' had for some time rendered the country safer for travelling Europeans than for its own unfortunate inhabitants. It was clearly understood that the murder of a subject of one of the Northern Powers would be dangerous and unprofitable. It was much better to receive them with fair words, and even amusing to see how easily they could be imposed upon in all matters which did not come under their own personal observation. Almost at the same time Frederick Nordern, a captain in the Danish Navy, was sent to travel in Egypt and report upon it; but his book is of little or no value. The Turkish officials soon found out that he was easily terrorised and diverted from any inconvenient purpose he might have formed; and though he went up the Nile as far as Pococke, and published some imposing volumes on his return, he seems to have learned less about the country than even a two weeks' tourist of to-day. Dr. Pococke's work is of real value, though, as far as the Copts were concerned, he laboured under the usual disadvantage of receiving all his information about them through the medium of Moslem interpreters or the zealous Roman Catholic missionaries, who could not forgive them for their loyalty to their National Church and Patriarch. Dr. Pococke landed at Alexandria in 1737, and went first to visit Cosmas, the Greek Patriarch, in Rosetta. John XVII. was then the Patriarch of the National Church; but during his travels Pococke associated almost exclusively with Moslems or with the Roman Catholic Franciscans, whose establish-

ments along the Nile were under the protection of the English. He visited Mohalla-el-Kebir, where he was told there were 500 Copts, and Pa-Hebeit (Iseum), where he saw the remains of a great temple; and then, after a stay in Cairo, went to the Fayoum and up the Nile. In his time the White and Red monasteries were still called by their proper names of Deyr Anbar Shenouda and Deyr Anbar Peschoi; and at Erment the remains of the magnificent church, which was one of the oldest in Egypt, excited his astonished admiration. Though the country was quiet during the months of his sojourn in Egypt, and he saw no actual fighting, he observes that the practice of poisoning each other among the Turkish classes was so common as hardly to excite remark, and that 'the word of a Turk passes for nothing' even between themselves. Most of the Copts, he found, knew how to read and write, but hardly any other class of natives could do so. He mentions that the Turkish Janissaries used to be entrusted with the collection of the poll-tax from the native Christians; but that now they were even worse off, as a Turk from Constantinople obtained this privilege by heavy bribes to the Sultan, and managed to squeeze even more out of the native Christians than the Janissaries could do. Pococke travelled also in Jerusalem and Cyprus, and ended his days as Bishop of Meath.

From 1736 to 1743 Osman Bey Zulfikar was the most powerful man in Egypt, of whom one quite exceptional virtue is recorded—that he never took bribes. For the rest, he was—like his compatriots—revengeful, treacherous, and merciless.

Unlike them, however, when his tyranny could be borne no longer, he was not murdered, but exiled to

Constantinople, where the Sultan received him with honour and made some attempt to compel the restitution of his goods (his house having been, as usual, sacked and pillaged), but with no success.

In 1743 a Pasha named Mohammed-el-Yadaksi proposed to reform Egypt. He began by an absolute prohibition of tobacco! Three times a day he sent his officer to parade the streets of Cairo, and all those found smoking were severely punished. He was recalled within two years, and it is not recorded of him that he succeeded in achieving any other reform. A learned Sheikh also endeavoured to reform his countrymen, and preached before several of the Emirs against their wickedness. These promptly gave their followers the order to assassinate him, but he escaped, and probably gave up the attempt to influence them, since he certainly died a natural death. The most striking feature in the history of this time is the cold-blooded treachery which all the Turkish Mamelukes alike displayed the moment there seemed to be any occasion of serving their own ends thereby. No oath seemed sufficiently binding to restrain them from acts which the mere tie of common nationality would be sufficient to deter one Englishman from committing against another.

In 1745 the Pasha (Mohammed Rogheb) received secret instructions from the Sultan that the families of Katemesh and Demiati, two of the most powerful Mameluke clans, were to be exterminated. The Pasha attempted to carry out his instructions, and planned a massacre of all the Beys at a general meeting of the Divan. But neither Bey nor Emir ever went unarmed or unprepared for treachery in those days; and though in the first onset

three of their number were cut down, the rest defended themselves and escaped from the citadel. They called out their followers, and another civil war took place, which ended in the death of several more Emirs and the flight of others into Upper Egypt. In 1748 a Pasha named Ahmed came to Cairo, who was devoted to science and desired to profit by the learning of the Egyptians. To this end he surrounded himself with all the most learned Sheikhs of the universities, only to discover that they knew almost nothing, and that their time was devoted for the most part to grammatical and theological subtleties. One of them, Sheikh Abdallah el Shabroni, who was the Sheikh El Azhar, he retained about him for some time, hoping to find that his first impressions were mistaken; but the Sheikh El Azhar was as ignorant as the rest. The Pasha repeatedly demanded where were the learned Egyptians of whom he had heard so much; and the Sheikh did not tell him, what he must have known, that what little learning and science still lingered in Egypt was to be found among the Christians. He searched diligently, on the other hand, to find a Moslem whose learning did come up to the modest requirements of the Turkish Pasha, and found him at last in the person of Sheikh Hassan, a man of Abyssinian extraction, father of the historian called Gabbarti, and the last teacher of astronomy in the mosque of El Azhar.

During the first half of this century the Christians had been left comparatively in peace while the Moslems quarrelled among themselves. Their arts and industries, indeed, had never quite recovered from the shock inflicted on them by the Ottoman conqueror, and were being gradually crushed out of existence by repeated exactions.

They had also suffered, in common with the Moslem Copts, from the constant brigandage of the Bedouin and the wandering armies of the Emirs. In Cairo no man who had anything to lose was safe, least of all a Christian or a Jew. In 1733 (A.H. 1146) the Kashef of each district had been ordered, in consequence of a firman received from the Sultan, to inflict a fine on every Christian or Jew in his district. They were roughly divided into three classes, according to their supposed means of payment; the first class was assessed at 420 paras a head, the second at 270, and the third at 100 a head.[1] But since the execution of Father Clement no Christian seems to have been put to death by the Government for his religion; nor had there been any formal order for the destruction of churches. Moreover, the Christians had become more and more indispensable to the Government, in consequence of the increasing ignorance and dishonesty among the Moslem 'upper' classes.

In 1731 the Roman missionaries had nine establishments south of Cairo—at Antinoe, Assiout, Abu Tige, Sedfeh, Akhmin, Girgeh, Luxor, Assuan, and even at Deyr in Nubia; for in this year we learn that Pope Clement XII. sent orders to the Superiors of all these places that they were to use their utmost endeavours to obtain Coptic children and send them to be educated in Rome. Even then the children sent were of Roman Catholic parents, since no member of the Coptic Church could be won over by threats or promises to part with his children for this

[1] The value of the Egyptian money was changed so often under the Ottoman Sultans that it is impossible to give an exact equivalent of this sum in English. Pococke says that in his time (1737) a purse meant in Egypt 25,000 medines, and a medine seems to have been worth about $2\frac{1}{2}d$.

purpose. Incidentally we learn that there were French and English passengers on the vessel which brought them down the Nile. When the ship reached Ansena, we are told, the French and English travellers went to see the ruins of the old city; but the Catholic Copts hastened to present themselves before the resident missionary, and attended a service in his chapel.

The same Pope wrote to John XVII. by Cardinal Belluga and another missionary, who were empowered to treat with the Coptic Patriarch in the Pope's name, if by any means he could be brought to submit himself and his Church to Rome; but the negotiations were as fruitless as usual. Clement's successor, Benedict XIV., threw off all pretence that the Coptic Church was in communion with Rome, and, instead of corresponding with the Patriarch, consecrated the first Roman Catholic Metropolitan who owned any real jurisdiction in Egypt. This man was a Copt, resident in Jerusalem, by name Athanasius, and the date of his appointment is 1741. Athanasius continued to reside in Jerusalem, and appointed a priest named Justus Maraglic his Vicar-General in Egypt, to whom in 1745 Pope Benedict addressed a long letter of instructions. About this time Raphael Tuky, a native of Girgeh, who had been caught young and educated at Rome, was appointed Bishop of Arsinoe—where, however, he does not seem to have been allowed to reside long.[1] He was a man of considerable learning, and was recalled to Rome to assist in the publication of various works in Coptic,

[1] In the later years of the eighteenth century the Roman Catholics were able to record a signal triumph, viz. the conversion of the Bishop of Girgeh to the Roman Church. He was persecuted, not apparently by the Copts, but by the Moslems, and escaped to Rome, where he lived till 1807.

including a grammar and some liturgies. Besides these he translated several Greek and Latin books into Coptic and Arabic.

In 1743 the King of Abyssinia sent an embassy to the Patriarch to ask for a new Abuna, Christodulos being dead. One of the men sent was an Egyptian named George, the two others were named Likanios and Theodorus, who was a priest. By this time all the sea-coast was in the hands of Mohammedans, and Abyssinia has never yet recovered any of her ancient ports. The Moslem Governor of Massowa seized and imprisoned the three envoys, took from them half of the money which had been entrusted to them for conveyance to Egypt, and threatened them with martyrdom. George the Egyptian disappeared; whether he was murdered or contrived to effect his escape was never known. Likanios at length gave way and became a Moslem; only Theodorus, on a ransom being sent from Abyssinia, was set free, and continued his journey to Cairo. It was not till 1745 that the new Abuna was able to set out for Abyssinia, and when he arrived at Massowa the same thing happened. They were thrown into prison, but Theodorus contrived some way of effecting his companion's escape, and, strange to say, was not immediately put to death in consequence. He was again held for ransom, and finally released on its arrival, when he returned to Abyssinia.

The Roman Catholic missionaries were by this time firmly established in Egypt; and though they made few converts from the National Church, they had a large following among the Syrians settled in Egypt, and other members of the Greek Church. They had churches of their own, which were frequented by many who did not

formally join them, but were doubtless counted as converts. The Sultan heard of the increase of European influence through these Latin establishments, and was disquieted thereby. He ordered the Patriarch of the Greek Church in Egypt to forbid any member of his communion to attend the European services, on pain of being fined collectively a sum of one thousand purses. The money was paid, and the Syrians continued to attend the Latin churches. One of the Egyptian Emirs seized the occasion to imprison four of the Latin missionaries and to extort a considerable sum of money for their ransom.

For some centuries the Copts had been forbidden to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and this prohibition was a constant source of grief to the devout among them. In the year 1753 (A.H. 1166) it was determined to make a renewed effort and try what bribery could effect. The Coptic secretary of one of the principal Emirs undertook the negotiations on behalf of his nation, and eventually the Sheikh El Azhar consented, in return for a bribe of 1,000 dinars (700*l.*), to procure them a *fetwa* (a permit or passport) ordering that the Copts should be permitted to make the pilgrimage in peace and safety, and that no Moslem should interfere with them. The *fetwa* was duly delivered to the Copts, and preparations for the pilgrimage were immediately commenced on a gigantic scale. The place of rendezvous was the desert on the east side of Cairo, and here hundreds of Christians arrived daily; gifts were prepared for offering at the Holy Sepulchre, litters were constructed for the women and children, and an escort of Bedouin was engaged for the journey. The news of the pilgrimage spread on all sides, and gave great offence to the Moslems. Abdallah el Shabroni, the Sheikh

El Azhar, found himself very unpopular in consequence of the permission which he had obtained for them, and at length the secret of his complaisance leaked out. He was openly reproached with the bribe he had taken, and at first flatly denied that he had received any money, though, as a matter of fact, he had received an extra backsheesh over and above the stipulated sum. When he perceived that denial was useless, he took another way of restoring his prestige among the Moslems. He called out the students of El Azhar, inflamed the mob by an harangue against the pilgrimage, and ended by exhorting them to fall upon the camp of the unsuspecting Christians. The crowd needed no second bidding. A tumultuous multitude, armed with sticks and stones, poured out upon the Copts, who were taken entirely by surprise. They were stoned and beaten, the whole camp was pillaged, and everything taken from them. No exertions of the Copts high in office could obtain any redress, and all the enormous expenses to which they had been put were thrown away.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

ALI BEY

1755 1471 1168 The next Emir who stands out sufficiently from the crowd of murderous brigands to be worth mention is Ali Bey. He was the freed slave of one of the principal Emirs, and after his master had met with the usual death by assassination, Ali Bey was himself in danger for some time. He had amassed considerable wealth under his late master, and spent it in buying Mamelukes, or military slaves, to strengthen himself in case of attack. When the attack came, however, after a bloody fight in the streets, Ali Bey was defeated, and took refuge in the Said with several other Beys who had espoused his cause. Collecting a considerable force, he marched again upon Cairo, defeated the rival Emirs in a pitched battle, and pursued them as far as Tanta.

Even here they were not safe, so rapidly had the power of Ali Bey increased. Tanta was taken by storm, one of the two Emirs who had entrenched themselves there was killed, and the other, who had taken refuge in the mosque, was starved into surrender, and afterwards strangled.

From this time, with the exception of two short periods in the years 1763 and 1765, when popular outbreaks of detestation drove him into exile for some months, Ali Bey reigned supreme in Egypt for ten years. It was a veritable

reign of terror; for, trusting to his private army of Mamelukes and the lack of combination among the other Beys, he exiled or murdered, by twenty or thirty at a time, all those whom he had reason to suspect of desiring to supplant him. He forbade the purchase of fresh Mamelukes —by which alone the fighting staff of the Beys could be kept up—to anyone but himself, and confiscated the wealth of those whom he had slain or exiled. He employed a physician of the Greek Church to poison a rival whom he dared not attack openly, but the attempt failed. If a man, particularly a Christian or a Jew, appeared to have money, he was liable at any moment to be arrested and tortured till he had paid down almost all that he possessed. One Jew, a clerk in the Boulac custom-house, died under the bastinado after he had already paid down 40,000 pieces of gold to purchase his release. Nor were the Moslems safe from his rapacity. In 1770 he imposed a special tax upon the whole of Egypt in addition to those under which the inhabitants groaned already. Every village was to contribute 100 dollars. It was no comfort to the Mohammedan Copts in these circumstances to know that their Christian brethren had, in addition to their share of this tax, to make up a further contribution of 100,000 dollars, and the Jews 40,000 dollars. The Moslem director of the mint having amassed an enormous fortune, Ali Bey exiled him and took everything he possessed, even to his clothes, arms, and books. He found it necessary to appoint a Christian to succeed him.

The Ottoman Sultan more than once endeavoured to compass the death of this too powerful Emir, and in 1768 formally despatched an order to the Pasha of the year in Egypt demanding the head of Ali Bey. The spies of the

latter warned him in time; he laid an ambuscade for the Imperial messenger, killed him, and took from him the Imperial firman. The next day he called a general assembly of the Mameluke Beys, displayed the firman, and assured them that his own murder was to have been followed by a general massacre of all the Mameluke Beys and Emirs. He invited them to throw off the Ottoman yoke and elect a Sultan from among themselves, as in the old days.

Whether desirous or not, no one dared at that time to oppose Ali Bey. The Pasha was ordered to leave the country at once, and Egypt was declared independent under Ali Bey. The coast of Syria promptly followed suit, and the Ottoman Sultan was too much occupied by his war with Russia to take any effectual action against Syria and Egypt. The Pasha of Damascus was ordered to send troops against the rebels, and did so, but was beaten by the Sheikh Zahir of Acre, who put 25,000 men to rout with 6,000 in the North of Syria. Ali Bey next directed his arms against the Hawarah Bedouin, who had invaded the Said and for some years had been masters of the country between Assiut and Assuan. They were subdued, and the whole country submitted to Ali Bey. Another Bedouin chief whose father and grandfather before him had ruled over a tract of country on the west bank of the Nile, and had been on friendly relations with Ali Bey for some time, was suddenly attacked by the latter and killed, together with forty of his men.

By the summary processes of murder and exile Ali Bey had rid himself of all formidable rivals among the Emirs, even of those who had been his friends, but who fell victims to his insatiable love of power and money. In

spite of his treatment of the Christians, the only man whom he seems to have really trusted was a Christian Copt, a man named Moallem Risk, whom he raised from the position of secretary to that of Controller of the Mint.

Moallem Risk was a man of some learning and particularly devoted to the study of astronomy, which proved a fortunate circumstance for Mr. Bruce, the well-known English traveller, who penetrated into Abyssinia at this time. Bruce landed in Alexandria in 1768, and Risk sent special orders that his luggage was not to be touched at the custom-house, nor any duty charged upon his belongings. Mr. Bruce, much pleased at this unexpected good fortune, sent a very handsome backsheesh in return to Moallem Risk when he arrived at Cairo. But the Copt returned it with offerings of his own, and a message to say that, when Mr. Bruce was sufficiently rested, Risk hoped to visit him and to be permitted to see him make use of his instruments. Meanwhile he had obtained a special guarantee for Mr. Bruce's safety from Ali Bey. It was by the advice of Moallem Risk also that Bruce took up his abode in the old fortress of Babylon, where the Patriarch had ordered rooms to be prepared for him. After some delays Bruce started on his adventurous journey up the river, but, having reached Assuan, he found it his best plan to retrace his steps to Luxor and make his way across to Kosseir, whence he went to Abyssinia by sea. He succeeded, however, in coming back the whole way by land, right through the Soudan, which had sunk by this time into the distracted and degraded state in which it has remained almost ever since. A negro dynasty, nominally Moslem, had finally crushed the Christian kingdom of the south, and from Senaar their representative

claimed a shadowy sovereignty over the whole of the Soudan.

The great traveller met with most undeserved unbelief and obloquy in his own day; but one very extraordinary error into which he fell does not seem to have been detected by anyone. He never discovered the existence of the Coptic Church!

Though the Patriarch of that Church gave him letters without which he could not possibly have accomplished his travels in safety, and though Bruce speaks with sincere gratitude of the help and kindness shown him by all the members of that Church, he writes all through of the *Greek* Church, and is evidently under the impression that the Patriarch Mark (whose name he gives correctly) was the Patriarch of the Orthodox Greek Church, to which, as Bruce thought, all Egypt and Abyssinia owned allegiance.[1] He never seems to have heard of the Greek Patriarch Cyprian, and, indeed, it is not improbable that the latter spent but little of his life in Egypt.

By the time Bruce reached Egypt again on his return journey, Ali Bey had fallen from the supreme power which he had committed so many crimes to obtain. He perished —not by the enterprise of the Ottoman Sultan, against whom he was prepared, having rebuilt the forts of Alexandria and Damietta; nor yet by the private vengeance of one of the many Emirs and Beys whom he had despoiled and exiled; but by the treachery of one of his own Mamelukes—Mohammed Abu Dahab.[2] This man, whom

[1] See pp. 108 and 109 of vol. i. of Mr. Bruce's Travels, p. 100 of vol. iii., p. 415 of vol. iv., and p. 199 of vol. vi.

[2] He owed his nickname of Abu Dahab ('Father of Gold') to the fact that when he was raised to the dignity of Sandjak his largesse to

Ali had bought as a youth and afterwards enfranchised and promoted in the usual way, was to the full as ambitious and treacherous as his master. He had been appointed general in command of the army, and in this capacity had won victories in the Hejaz and in Syria. But in the midst of his conquests in Syria he conspired with the officers under him, and agreed to disobey the orders of Ali Bey. Instead of proceeding with the campaign, Mohammed quietly marched back to Egypt and refused to fight any more. As the army was plainly on his side, Ali Bey did not dare to punish him openly, but he attempted to assassinate him. His house was surrounded during the night; but Mohammed Abu Dahab, at the head of his immediate followers, broke through the ranks and escaped to the Said, where he was speedily joined by all the discontented Beys and their troops.

Ali Bey despatched an army against him, but the great part deserted to Mohammed Abu Dahab, who had been bribing right and left for some years. The small remainder returned with the news to Cairo. Ali Bey raised fresh levies, and, sending one-half under another Ali Bey to meet Mohammed, he established himself with the remainder at the convent of Basatin, of which he took possession. He threw up entrenchments which reached from the convent on the banks of the Nile to the Mokattam hills, and planted cannon at intervals. But his troops were defeated, and desertions were so frequent that Ali Bey saw the end had come. In the night he deserted his position, and, hastily collecting his personal goods and riches from Cairo, he took flight into Syria.

the crowd was flung in gold instead of silver, and that for the rest of his life he continued to give gold where others gave silver.

Mohammed Bey Abu Dahab occupied his position without striking a blow. Nevertheless, he pillaged and then burnt the unfortunate convent which had been compelled to shelter his rival. He entered Cairo as a conqueror, beheaded the man whom he had some reason to fear would remain faithful to Ali, and ordered that all the new coinage which had been struck by Moallem Risk should be withdrawn from circulation.

He then wrote to the Sultan to assure him of his submission and to express his readiness to receive a Pasha from the Sublime Porte. He ordered some of the Beys to write a letter to Ali Bey in Syria, begging him to return, and assuring him that they would betray Mohammed to him as soon as he appeared. Meanwhile Ali Bey had obtained reinforcements from two sources in Syria—he had negotiated with the Russians, who were the natural enemies of the Ottoman Turks, for the loan of artillery, munitions of war, and 3,000 Albanian soldiers; and had also renewed his alliance with Zahir of Acre. One of his officers had already reconquered Tyre and other towns on the coast of Syria besides Jaffa (which he resigned to Sheikh Zahir), Gaza, Ramleh, and Lydda. On receiving the false embassy from the Egyptian Mamelukes he at once directed his march on Egypt, and at Salahieh met with the forces of Mohammed Bey.

In the first encounter Ali Bey was victorious, but his faithless Mameluke did not trust to fighting alone. He harangued the Egyptian troops in the character of an earnest Moslem, assuring them that Allah would not permit Ali Bey, who had forsaken the faith and entered into an alliance with the Christian infidels, to triumph over them. Moreover, he intrigued with the two principal Beys who

had followed the fortunes of Ali Bey—Ibrahim Bey and Murad Bey—to ensure their desertion of their master at the critical moment. Besides enormous bribes in money, Murad Bey stipulated in addition that the favourite wife of Ali Bey, Sitte Nefissa, a beautiful Georgian, should be given up to him.

The bargain was agreed upon, and at the critical moment the two Beys deserted to the side of Mohammed; the rest of Ali's army fled, the ten Mamelukes who alone remained with him were slain, and Ali Bey, mortally wounded, was carried in a litter to Cairo, where seven days afterwards he expired. It was said at the time that the doctors whom Mohammed Bey sent to attend him were instructed that their patient must not recover.

Ali Bey had done a great deal of building in Egypt during his ten years' reign, principally at Boulac, where he had constructed an embankment and a bazaar, which gave great offence, since it occupied the site of some beautiful gardens, and was, according to Gabbarti, one of the ugliest erections ever seen.

In the latter half of this century a great many buildings were constructed by an Emir named Abd-el-Rahman. This man built or restored eighteen large mosques in Cairo. The mosque of the Moghrabins; the mosque of El Saida el Setouhia, near the Bab-el-Futuh; the mosque Hussein, the mosque Saida Zeinab,[1] the mosque Saida Sekina, another called Saida Aïsha, the mosque of Abu-el-Seoud el Jarhi, the mosque Sherif-el-Din el Kurdi, the mosque of the Sheikh el Hefni, and three others whose names are not given are amongst those which were new. He also set up many schools and

[1] Saida Zeinab was not finished till some years later.

sebils (or public fountains), besides bridges and private houses.

With all this, Abd-el-Rahman does not receive a very good character from the Moslem historian Gabbarti, who accuses him of unbounded avarice, which led him to amass money in all sorts of illegitimate ways. He was the loyal follower of Ali Bey, who repaid his devotion, so soon as he felt strong enough to do it with impunity, by exile to the Hejaz. Abd-el-Rahman was permitted to return, when an old man, in 1776; but the journey was too much for him, and he died a few days afterwards.

Mohammed Bey Abu Dahab recalled several of the Emirs who had been exiled by Ali Bey, and restored them to their ancient privileges. He did not, however, enjoy the supreme power which he had coveted more than a few years. In 1775 he invaded Syria, which still remained for the most part in the hands of Sheikh Zahir. He took Jaffa by assault and massacred the inhabitants to a man—Moslem, Jew, and Christian alike. Most of the women were given over as prey to the soldiers, and the children were distributed as slaves. This bloody deed struck terror throughout Syria. Sheikh Zahir left Acre, bidding the inhabitants make what terms they could. Not only Acre but all the other towns submitted to Mohammed Abu Dahab without striking a blow. Cairo received orders to illuminate and decorate itself in his honour; but even as it obeyed, the news came that Mohammed was dead. It was generally believed in Egypt that he died of joy at his own success.

The death of Mohammed Abu Dahab left Egypt in the hands of the three principal Mameluke Beys, since the Pashas who went and came at intervals from Constantinople

were but puppets to soothe the pride of the Ottoman Sultan and make him content with nominal sovereignty and his yearly tribute. These three Beys were Ismail Bey, who had been left in charge of Egypt during Mohammed's Syrian campaign; Ibrahim Bey, who was Governor of Cairo; and Murad Bey, who succeeded to the command of the army on Mohammed's death. All these Beys had been the slaves of Ali Bey, and had betrayed their master; the nationality of the former is not stated, but the two latter were Circassians.

It was not long before dissensions broke out between the three. Murad and Ibrahim combined against Ismail Bey, and, after petty fights had inflicted incalculable misery on the innocent population, a pitched battle left the two Circassians masters of the field. Ismail Bey fled the country, but returned in a few months with fresh forces, only to receive a more crushing defeat in the desert near Helwan. Almost all the remainder of his house perished, and he himself escaped with difficulty to one of the caves in the Mokattam hills, where he lay concealed for three days. Murad and Ibrahim now lived as conquerors in the country, plundering where they would, and mocking the Sultan with a yearly account in which they represented that the sums due to Egypt from the Sublime Porte more than balanced the amount due from Egypt as tribute.

During the years 1777–80 M. Sonnini was sent to travel in Egypt by the French Government, the objects of his inquiries being both scientific and political, since the French Court was already meditating that invasion which Bonaparte some years later carried out. M. Sonnini was no doubt an excellent man of science, but his impatient

and overbearing character ill-fitted him for travel and research in Egypt. Moreover, he believed everything that was told him, however incredible, if it were to the disadvantage of the Egyptians, particularly the Christians; and he had evidently a strong partiality for their Mameluke tyrants, although he is compelled to admit that they were responsible for the ruin and misery of the country. He spent most of his time at Rosetta, where the Europeans were allowed more liberty than in any other town in Egypt; whereas in Cairo he could hardly show himself outside the gates of the French quarter, owing to the disturbed state of the town.[1] From Rosetta, however, he made an expedition to the Wady Natron; and from Cairo, armed with a letter from Murad Bey and disguised as a physician, he was able to make his way with great difficulty as far as Luxor, in the vain hope of reaching Abyssinia by way of the Soudan. Civil war broke out again, and he was compelled to return to Cairo. He mentions that all the Europeans in Cairo employed Berbers as servants except the French, who had been forbidden to do so by their own Government since the murder of De Roule in 1706. Finding that not even the money tribute was forthcoming from Egypt under Murad and Ibrahim, the Sultan of Turkey, now Abd-el-Hamid, who had succeeded to the throne in 1774, resolved to interfere. He did not care whether Egypt were

[1] Sonnini mentions that a few days after Ismail Bey had been driven into exile, Murad Bey, desiring to destroy one of Ismail's friends who had taken refuge in the citadel, sent for an English engineer named Robinson, and desired him to set the citadel on fire. The Englishman refused, alleging as an excuse that to do so would need mortars and bombs, and that none could be procured nearer than Venice. Instead of beheading Robinson, as Sonnini seems to think was to be expected, Murad dismissed him with a thousand sequins!

oppressed or his governor reduced to a cypher, but he did care about his money, and resolved to fight for it. In the year 1786[1] (A.H. 1200) a Turkish army landed at Alexandria under Hassan Pasha, and after a bloody battle Murad and Ibrahim were defeated and fled to the Said, leaving Hassan Pasha to march to Cairo unopposed.[2] Submission, however, could not save the unoffending population from the miseries inseparable from the passage of a Turkish army. Behind them as they marched the country was left desolate and ruined, and those villagers were lucky who had time to fly before them, and thus escape with the loss of all their property and the ruin of their crops. Hassan entered Cairo on August 1, 1786, and began by confiscating all that belonged to the rebellious Beys, selling everything by public auction, including the inmates of their harems. He sent an expedition to the Said against Murad and Ibrahim; but, after a great deal of bloodshed on both sides and the ruin of that part of the country, the two Beys retreated into the Soudan, and the Turkish expedition returned to Cairo.

Hassan Pasha stayed about a year in Cairo, and restored Ismail Bey to power as Sheikh El Beled. He executed a great number of the most turbulent Mame-

[1] Early in this year 1786 the great door of the mosque of Sultan Hassan was solemnly reopened. The shops which had been built in front of it were demolished and a wall pulled down. The door had been built up for fifty years, ever since the massacre of the eleven Fikarite Emirs in 1736, when the great door of the mosque had been burnt to effect an entrance for the murderers.

[2] When the Russian Government became aware that the Ottoman Sultan proposed to send an expedition to Egypt, the Russian Consul at Alexandria received instructions to arrange an alliance with the Mameluke Beys against Turkey, and he made overtures to Ibrahim and Murad Bey in consequence. But they declined European interference, believing themselves secure; and when Hassan Pasha landed, they found it was too late.

lukes, and Cairo enjoyed a certain amount of security in the public streets during his stay. Except for this boon, however, the unfortunate country was but little better off. A terrible outbreak of cattle plague almost destroyed the beasts throughout Egypt, and the taxes, instead of being lightened in consequence, were made more burdensome than ever.

As usual, the Christians suffered most, since, besides the burdens which they shared in common with their Moslem fellow-countrymen, Hassan Pasha organised a regular system of persecution. With the accession of Mohammed Abu Dahab their brief season of prosperity had come to an end; all the old iniquitous laws were put in force against them, and every excuse sought for oppression and robbery. The Copts who had risen to power under Ali Bey were degraded, their goods confiscated, their houses and those of their children were pillaged and destroyed.[1] In addition to the old oppressions new insults were put upon them by Hassan Pasha. It was announced by heralds in the street that no Christian should be permitted to ride any animal at all, or own a single slave. Henceforth, moreover, no Christian or Jew was permitted to bear the name of any prophet or patriarch mentioned in the Old Testament. All those already known by such names were to change them at once. This order was obeyed only so far as their communication with the

[1] Nevertheless, Moallem Ibrahim-el-Johari, chief clerk of the finance department, had made himself so universally liked and respected by both Moslem and Christian that he was exempted from persecution, and under Ibrahim Bey rose once more into great favour. Through his influence the churches and monasteries were allowed a little later to be restored, and he gave a great deal of land and money for the support of the National Church. When he died, Ibrahim Bey followed the funeral in person to do him honour.

Moslems was concerned, so that from henceforth many Copts were known by one name to the Moslems and by another among their fellow-Christians. At the present time the former name has in many instances become the surname of a Coptic family.

This order was followed in a few days by a forcible confiscation of all the slaves owned by Christians. The soldiers broke into all the Christian houses—a task which must have been singularly congenial to them—and drove out by main force all the slaves whom they found. The unfortunate creatures were forced in droves up to the citadel, where by order of the Pasha they were put up to public auction. Most of them were bought in by the soldiers, who set up a regular slave market in the citadel, and sold the slaves at an increased price to all who came for them.

An inquisition was made into the number of the Christians and the houses and property belonging to them. A fine of 500 purses was imposed upon them, and the poll-tax for the year was doubled, every Christian in Egypt paying two dinars a head instead of one. In addition, the Christian families who had been in the employment of the rebel Beys Murad and Ibrahim had an extra fine to pay.

No Moslem house of any wealth or importance could carry on its business without employing Christians for all offices requiring intelligence and probity, and the number of Christians who had been engaged in the service of Murad and Ibrahim was so large that their fines produced the sum of 75,000 dollars. The Patriarch at that time was John XVIII. His treasurer was arrested, but, fortunately for him, Hassan Pasha was recalled to Turkey

in the autumn of the year 1787[1] to take command of an expedition against the Russians. Ismail Bey was left to the exercise of almost unchecked power, for Abdi, the new Pasha sent by the Ottoman Government, was, as usual, a mere cypher. The limits of Ismail's power were indeed greatly circumscribed in one sense, for Ibrahim and Murad still held possession of the Said as far north as Minieh in open rebellion.[2]

For some years the monotonous record of strife and oppression continues. 'During this time,' says the Moslem historian Gabbarti, whose pages are full of detailed accounts, 'all business was at a standstill, and we were more miserable than we had ever been in our lives. The roads were destroyed, and no place anywhere was secure.' Where the Emirs were not, the predatory Bedouin took their place, and all through the country neither life nor property was safe. Not even the caravan of the Mecca pilgrimage was respected, and Ismail Bey in vain attempted to strengthen his position by importing Roumelian and Albanian soldiers; they only added fresh elements

[1] In the early days of this year the Christians had been subjected to a new outrage. Abdi Pasha, happening to pass through a part of the town which he had not before seen, asked Ismail Bey, who was riding with him, what was the name of the quarter. On being told that it was almost entirely occupied by Christians, he gave orders that all the houses should be at once demolished. Before the order could be carried out the principal Christians obtained its revocation on payment of a sum of 35,000 dollars, of which 17,000 was paid by the Syrians and the rest by the Copts.

[2] Gabbarti tells us that in the year 1789 an ambassador arrived from India, sent by the Sultan Haider, to demand aid from the Ottoman Sultan to make war against the English in India. Abd-el-Hamid permitted him to recruit in Egypt; but Gabbarti says that, as he insisted on branding everyone who came to take service under him with an ineffaceable mark, he did not obtain many followers.

of strife among the different military corps. In the early spring of the year 1791 (A.H. 1205) one of the terrible outbreaks of pestilence which were so frequent in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries carried off Ismail Bey among thousands of lesser victims. This paved the way for the return of Murad and Ibrahim Bey, since the Emirs left in Cairo were too much divided between themselves concerning the succession to make common cause against them. They entered Cairo as the acknowledged masters of Egypt in June or July, and, their own houses and families having been destroyed and sold, they took possession of several belonging to Emirs who had lately died of the plague, married their widows, and annexed their slaves. The Albanian and Syrian soldiers who had been in the service of Ismail received three days' notice to quit the country.

That year the Nile did not rise to any height, and great scarcity of provisions was added to the other miseries of the country. In vain did Ibrahim and Murad patrol the streets to punish any tradesman caught selling goods at famine prices; they were obeyed while they passed down the street, and no longer. For themselves, the Beys brought plentiful supplies from Upper Egypt, but these they stored in their own houses and refused to share with the starving populace. 'Tyranny, injustice, and famine,' says Gabbarti, 'reigned throughout the country.' In 1793 the pilgrim caravan was again attacked by the Bedouin, the greater part of the pilgrims massacred, and all their goods stolen. A popular insurrection warned the Beys that there was a limit beyond which even the unarmed Egyptians would turn upon them. They found it expedient to sign a paper drawn up by the principal

Sheikhs of the town promising to amend their ways, to abolish unjust exaction and open robbery, and to send their dues more regularly to Mecca. But this agreement was observed for about a month, and after that all the old practices were revived. At the close of the eighteenth century Egypt was perhaps in a worse condition than she had been in at any time since the Roman conquest. Her industries were paralysed, her commerce ruined, and the same relapse into barbarism which had already overtaken the Soudan was rapidly overwhelming the more fertile soil and historic civilisation of Egypt. But the little body of Europeans who, by virtue of their immunities and the foreign power at their back, kept alive the feeble spark of commercial life which was all that was left to her, had not been uninterested spectators of her increasing weakness; and the French, who all over the world at that date were dreaming of universal conquest, felt that their time had come.

CHAPTER XXXIX

THE FRENCH INVASION

A.D. 1798
A.M. 1514
A.H. 1212

It was on July 1, 1798, that Bonaparte, with his army of 37,000 men, arrived in the harbour of Alexandria, and sent a boat to bring off the French Consul before commencing hostilities. From him they learnt that on June 28, only two days before, Nelson with the English fleet had been at Alexandria in search of the French, and, finding that no one had seen or heard of them, had set sail again immediately in further search. Nelson had, however, seen Said Mohammed Kerim, the Governor of Cairo, and had warned him of the approaching danger from the French. But the Moslem authorities, with the confidence born of ignorance, refused all offers of help or alliance with the English.

'This country belongs to the Sultan,' they said, 'and neither the French nor anyone else has anything to do with it.' The English withdrew, and Said Mohammed Kerim sent the news to Cairo, where it was received with the same incredulous contempt. The Emirs loudly boasted that all the Europeans together could not stand for a single instant before them; but had only to appear, to be crushed under the feet of their horses.

Three days later, however, the French fleet came in sight, and a message of a very different character was at

once despatched by the governor to Murad Bey: 'My lord, the fleet which has just approached is immense; we can discover neither its beginning nor its end. For the love of God and his Prophet, send us some fighting men.'

On the receipt of this communication Murad Bey rode straight to the house of Ibrahim Bey (now the Kasr-el-Ain Hospital), and an informal council was hastily summoned. Much time was wasted in useless recriminations, but eventually it was agreed that Murad Bey should proceed down the left bank of the Nile to meet the French army, Ibrahim should occupy Boulac with a reserve force to protect Cairo, and the Pasha (Abu Bekr Tarabulsi) was to send a courier express to Constantinople for aid.

Meanwhile the position of all the Christians in Cairo, both native and European, was one of great danger. Indeed, the proposal was at once made in the Divan that the first measure taken should be the extermination of every Christian in Cairo in a general massacre; and it was only overborne by a narrow majority of those who realised the impolicy and extreme difficulty of such a proceeding at this juncture. Ibrahim Bey, always more favourable to the Christians than Murad, was firm in his protection of them, and his wife received and preserved many Europeans and their families; but the Copts were daily insulted, and threatened with death and pillage at the earliest opportunity. Their churches, convents, and houses were searched for arms; 'in a word,' says Gabbarti, 'Egypt became from this moment the theatre of robberies and assassinations without number.'

Bonaparte landed at Alexandria almost without opposition, and his soldiers readily scaled the crumbling walls.

In the town the Moslems kept up a fire from their windows for a short time, but in the afternoon they surrendered at discretion. Said Mohammed submitted to Bonaparte, and was appointed by him civil governor of the town under Kleber, who was left in Alexandria with a garrison of 3,000 men. A sort of municipal council was at once created, the printing-presses were disembarked and set to work to turn out Arabic proclamations, of which a great many were published by Bonaparte during his stay in Egypt. They were all much in the same style: appeals to the down-trodden people of Egypt to rise and join their deliverers, assurances that the French were true Moslems, and threats of the terrible penalties which should swiftly overtake those who dared to resist.[1] Most of these proclamations are given in full by the three men who have published detailed accounts of the French invasion—M. Ryme in his 'Égypte Française,' Abderrahman Gabbarti in his 'History of Egypt since the Ottoman Conquest,' and Mr. Paton in his 'History of the Egyptian Revolution.'

On July 7 Bonaparte left Alexandria and marched to Rahmanieh, the army suffering terribly from heat and thirst on the way. From hence General Dugua was despatched to secure Rosetta, where the European population was in imminent danger; and after this end had

[1] Napoleon made one of the great blunders of his life when he proclaimed himself a Moslem and the friend of Moslems on his arrival in Egypt. No single Moslem believed in his professions; it only mingled contempt with their terror of the French, and destroyed, so far as the French were concerned, that belief in the good faith and honesty of the Frangi which is still one of our most valuable aids in dealing with Orientals. He gave the greatest offence, too, by requiring that all who submitted to him should wear the tricoloured cockade.

been achieved the French army continued its march on Cairo. Every village was deserted on their approach, the inhabitants carrying off everything that they possibly could, and the French suffered severely from want of provisions.

At Shebreiss they met with Murad Bey and 4,000 mounted Mamelukes, but after a sharp action the latter retired and fell back towards Cairo, abandoning his artillery and baggage. He took up a position at Embaba, where he strongly entrenched himself, while Ibrahim Bey did the same thing on the opposite side of the river at Boulac. On July 21 the French army arrived at Embaba, and the same day the great battle commenced which decided the fate of Egypt. The Mamelukes fought well, but they were outnumbered and out-generalled from the beginning. After some hours of hard fighting Murad Bey took flight with his immediate followers, and halting for a few moments at his Gizeh country-house, in order to secure his money and valuables, fled precipitately into Upper Egypt. For the Mamelukes who were still left fighting at Embaba it soon became a mere massacre. Many were drowned in the river, but most were slain on the field. Ibrahim Bey, hearing that all was lost, abandoned Boulac and fled with Bekr Pasha into Cairo.

Here the panic was universal. Everyone who could fled to Upper Egypt, and every beast of burden commanded double price. All Saturday the stream of fugitives went on; but hardly had they passed beyond the gates of the town, when they were set upon by the Bedouin whom Ibrahim Bey had called to his aid. They took all the valuables which each person was bearing with him. They stripped every woman to the skin, and dis-

honoured most of them, even those of high rank. They assassinated all those who made the smallest attempt at resistance. Those who were able to escape back into the town with their lives considered themselves fortunate. 'Never in the whole history of Egypt,' says Gabbarti, 'was there a night so full of horror as this. Terrible enough to hear of, it was far more terrible to see.'

On Monday the French entered Cairo, and Bonaparte established himself in the newly built palace of an Emir in the Ezbekieh. He set about organising a Divan for the government of Cairo, after the pattern of that which had been already established in Alexandria, under General du Puy, who was made Governor of Cairo, and M. Poussielgne, who became General Financial Administrator. Ten Moslem Sheikhs of Arab or Egyptian descent, three Mamelukes chosen by these Sheikhs, and two Christian Franco-Egyptians comprised this Divan, which received instructions that their first business was to raise a sum of 500,000 dollars for the necessities of the French army. The latter was also allowed free pillage of all the Mamelukes' houses; those Egyptians who did not wish to be confounded with them, and pillaged alike, obtained patents of protection in writing from Bonaparte, which they fixed upon their doors.

Public security was, however, maintained more effectually than it had been for generations in Cairo. The inhabitants were compelled, under stringent penalties, to sweep, water, and light their streets, and the massive wooden doors which for a century or two had made it possible to shut off every street and alley from any communication with the rest of the town—a most necessary precaution under the Mameluke rule—were removed, to allow

free patrol to the French garrison. M. Samuel Bernand was appointed Controller of the Mint, and money continued to be struck from the old dies, with the cypher of the reigning Sultan.

A considerable force was despatched in search of Ibrahim Bey, who, with his Mamelukes, had withdrawn into the Delta, and there was a good deal of indecisive fighting, in which both sides claimed the victory. Finally, in August, Ibrahim made his way into Syria and took refuge with Djezzar at Acre.

It was on August 1 that Nelson returned to the shores of Egypt in pursuit of the French, and anchored off Aboukir, where the French fleet was stationed. At sunset on the same day the battle of Aboukir commenced, and by noon the next day every ship of the French fleet but four was taken or destroyed.

The loss of their fleet struck with consternation every Frenchman in Egypt. Bonaparte did his best to minimise the effect on the minds of the natives, and a Syrian who had ventured to tell the truth about it in Cairo was severely punished; but the Moslems slowly realised the importance of what had happened, and before two months were over a serious insurrection broke out in Cairo. In fact, the virtues of the French were as much against them as their vices; and they had contrived to set every class, nationality, and creed in Egypt against them. The Mamelukes, of course, were their avowed enemies. The Arab and Egyptian Moslems resented equally their false profession of Islam; the vexatious bureaucratic restrictions without which no Frenchman can govern; the sanitary laws which necessitated the inspection of private houses, not excepting even the harems; and last, but, we

fear, not least, the licence permitted to the French soldiery in the matter of the native women.[1]

The Copts, of course, not only resented the false profession of Islam, but, not conceiving that a great nation could exist without any religion at all, as was almost the case with the French of that day, they identified the invaders with the Roman Catholic Power which so constantly endeavoured to take away their place and nation.

The immediate cause of the outbreak, which took place on October 22, 1798, was the imposition of a house-tax in Cairo. The Sheikhs of El Azhar sent their readers to summon all the faithful to the mosque of El Azhar, and, when they were collected, the first attack was made upon the house of General Caffarelli. Barricades were thrown up; all the French caught walking about the streets, among whom were four members of the Institute, were murdered; and many native Christians shared the same fate. But the ignorant Moslems had taken no pains to guard the mounds which dominated the city on the south and east, and the next day they were all bristling with French cannon. Messages were sent to the Sheikhs enjoining immediate submission, but, as these were received with scorn by the insurgents, order was given for the bombardment to commence.

A few hours of heavy cannonading, principally directed against the El Azhar and Hussein quarters, reduced the Sheikhs to capitulation. The French entered the town, throwing down the barricades, and occupied the mosque

[1] Nothing has so astonished the Egyptian of our own time as the good behaviour of our English soldiers in this respect. It is almost the one subject on which every inhabitant of the country agrees in praising the English. 'Not even good Moslem soldiers,' they end by saying, , could ever have been trusted as the English can be trusted!'

of El Azhar, where they stabled their horses, broke the lamps, and effaced the extracts from the Koran. Numerous arrests were made, and several of the principal as well as a great number of lesser dignitaries were decapitated. Indeed, Bonaparte himself states, in a letter to General Regnier, that every night at this time he cut off thirty heads by way of making an example!

In August General Desaix had been despatched up the Nile in search of Murad Bey, who halted in the Fayoum to re-form his army. The first battle between them was fought on October 8 at Sediman, near Beni-Souef, in which Murad Bey was completely routed and the French lost 400 killed and wounded. Desaix occupied the Fayoum, and, leaving a garrison there, followed Murad up the Nile. Another engagement took place on January 23, 1799, in which Murad was again defeated. Still the French continued the pursuit, and occupied the frontier town of Assuan, Murad having retired into Nubia, where they did not attempt to follow him, though they occupied Philæ and fortified Assuan. On the return march another Mameluke Bey, with a large following, met them in the Thebaid, and several sharp skirmishes took place.

Meanwhile the position of the French in Cairo was very far from being comfortable. The English blockaded the coast, and no supplies for the French were allowed to enter the country. Moreover, the Turks were preparing to reconquer Egypt by way of Syria, and Bonaparte determined to be beforehand with them.

Towards the end of January, 1799, Bonaparte left Egypt with about 15,000 men. El Arish surrendered after a few days' resistance, and the Mameluke garrison

was sent back to Cairo and displayed to the populace as prisoners.

Jaffa was taken by assault on March 5, and 4,000 of the garrison, who had entrenched themselves in a large Khan, offered to surrender on promise that their lives should be spared, else they would defend themselves to the death. The offer was accepted, and the 4,000 prisoners were brought disarmed to Bonaparte. He refused to sanction the agreement which his aides-de-camp had made, though they reminded him that they had been specially instructed to restrain useless carnage, and two days later the whole of the prisoners were massacred in cold blood on the sea-shore by his orders.

By his own act Bonaparte thus destroyed all chance of his success in Syria. Every Moslem in the land, warned by the fate of the prisoners at Jaffa, resolved to die fighting, if needs must, but never to surrender. Moreover, the unburied corpses caused in a few days a terrible outbreak of the plague, which carried off a large proportion of the French garrison.

The French army was next marched upon Acre, but was disagreeably surprised to find an English fleet waiting to take part in the defence. The siege began on March 18, and every effort was made by the French for the capture of the city, but in vain. Sir Sidney Smith and his followers directed the defence, and at a critical moment by a personal advance saved the town. The siege had lasted nearly a month, and on the last two days alone, when the French made a desperate assault, they lost no fewer than 700 men. Bonaparte realised that his Syrian expedition had failed, and that he must return to Egypt. He sent a letter to the Divan of Cairo, in which

he assured them that he had not left one stone of Acre upon another; but the Cairenes very well understood the real state of affairs, and their historian Abderrahman Gabbarti laughs at Bonaparte's letter, and enumerates sixteen reasons which Bonaparte *might* have given for his retreat from Acre had he been inclined to tell the truth.

The French army retreated in good order, but suffering greatly, to Jaffa. The town was full of the plague, and the number of the sick and wounded became so great that there were no possible means of transport for them. A great many of the most incapable were crowded into boats and told to make their way by sea to Damietta. But having neither water nor provisions, nor sufficient sailors to navigate the boats, the flotilla in despair steered straight for the English vessels which were following the French army. Sir Sidney Smith received them with the greatest kindness, supplied them with all necessaries, and sent them under safe escort to Damietta. The fate of those who filled the hospital in Jaffa was less happy. The Turks were rapidly approaching, and the French army must push on. Bonaparte therefore gave orders to poison all the wounded of his own army. The chief physician indignantly refused, and to this day it is not certainly known whether his assistant carried out the order or whether the wounded Frenchmen were all massacred by the Turks the next day.

On June 14 Bonaparte made a triumphal entry, with music and banners flying, into Cairo. Gabbarti significantly remarks that the soldiers looked pale and exhausted.

Indeed, their troubles were far from over. Murad Bey was coming down in force, having divided his army into two parts, one advancing by the left and the other by the

right bank of the Nile; while at the same time the combined forces of the English and the Turks were on their way to attack by sea. Bonaparte struck promptly and with fatal effect at the Mamelukes. The force on the east, which was intended to effect a junction with Ibrahim Bey in Syria, was surprised, with such complete success that 700 camels laden with Mameluke property fell into the hands of the French, and the Mamelukes were scattered in every direction. The western force was under the command of Murad himself, whose aim was to reach the north coast, but, learning that a large body of French had been posted to intercept him, he retired upon Gizeh. Here he was attacked by Napoleon in person, defeated, and once more took refuge in the south.

On July 15, 1799, Napoleon heard that the Turkish fleet had appeared off Aboukir. He at once set out in person with his army, and arrived at Alexandria on the 23rd, to find that the Turkish army had already disembarked in force. Sir Sidney Smith, who had accompanied the Turks, in vain tried by every means to induce them to fortify their position against the rapidly advancing French army. He sent what men he could spare to see it done, but the inertia of the Turks could not be sufficiently overcome; and when the French arrived, the covering operations were by no means completed. In the battle which followed the Turks were totally defeated, their baggage and artillery taken, and many hundreds of them only escaped death by swimming for refuge to the English ships. The fort refused to surrender, but the Turks within spent their time in fighting one another, and after seven days' bombardment the remains of the garrison rushed out unarmed and begged for mercy. Two thousand of them

were made prisoners. The battle was won, but the cause of the French was lost from the same date. Napoleon had heard for some time rumours of the ill-fortune of the French Republic in its recent undertakings, and was determined to obtain trustworthy news. *For this end*, M. Ryme says, Napoleon arranged an exchange of prisoners with Sir Sidney Smith, and his account of the transaction is so curious an instance of French prejudice that it is worth translating :—

The Englishman not only agreed at once to the proposition, he loaded the officers who brought it with kindness, and offered to send the French general all his late newspapers, being sure, he said, that neither the officers nor the privates of the French army would be sorry to receive news of the country from which they had been so long separated. Is it necessary to say that Bonaparte hastened to accept an offer which he had hoped to receive? Is it necessary to add that under this appearance of a delicate attention our enemy only concealed a ruse of war? Why should Sidney Smith wish to communicate to us his European news, if he did not foresee the disastrous result for France? It was not only that he promised himself a malicious pleasure in the regret we must feel! He saw further. He knew that the papers would excite (in Bonaparte) an irresistible desire to fly to the succour of his country, so that he would think himself fortunate to be allowed to retire from Egypt even by a species of capitulation. What happiness for Sidney Smith thus to obtain by a trick what England had made so many useless sacrifices to accomplish! Or if Bonaparte abandoned his army and set out alone, better still for Sidney Smith. He would capture him; and, Bonaparte once a prisoner, the French would soon evacuate Egypt!

Comment on this passage is needless, but if the Englishman could not guess how his simple act of courtesy would

be interpreted, the Frenchman did act precisely as his countrymen seemed to expect. Napoleon from this time resolved to abandon his army in Egypt and return to a more familiar theatre of operations. He was sick of the whole thing, since his failure in Syria and the slow building up of a reformed government in Egypt was not at all to his taste. He returned to enjoy another triumphal entry into Cairo, but he at once communicated his intentions in secrecy to Berthier, Bourrienne, and Admiral Ganteaume, who was ordered to fit out the four frigates which were all that were left of the French fleet with such things as were necessary, without the knowledge of the English. To Kleber he pretended that he was going to Rosetta, and made an appointment to meet him there on August 24, at the same time that he wrote to tell Ganteaume that he should leave Egypt on August 22, for he heard on the 17th that the last ship of the English fleet had left, and this was all for which he was waiting. He left Cairo on the 18th, and the rumour that he had abandoned the army at once spread and gathered strength. When Kleber arrived at Rosetta, he first heard of the trick which had been played upon him, and almost immediately a letter was brought to him from Napoleon, resigning to him the command of the army in Egypt, with power to conclude a peace with the Ottoman Sultan if he thought fit. Kleber was extremely angry, and, at once returning to Cairo, issued a proclamation on September 26, 1799, in which he set forth that General Bonaparte had departed for France without informing anybody; that the armed force had been reduced to one-half its original strength; that the French enemies were no longer the Mamelukes, but three Great Powers—the Porte, England, and Russia.

Moreover, the proclamation stated that the soldiers were almost without clothing, and that Bonaparte, though he had forestalled the taxes, had left a deficit of almost twelve millions of francs. Murad Bey had still a large force in Upper Egypt, and the Turks were advancing from Syria, besides sending a fleet to Damietta. In this state of affairs Kleber announced that he intended to open negotiations with the Sultan.

The first attack of the Turks on Damietta was repulsed, but Kleber knew that his position was desperate, and the negotiations were begun in November —at first on board the ship of Sir Sidney Smith, and afterwards at El Arish, where the Grand Wuzir of Turkey was encamped. They were almost broken off by the Turkish attack on El Arish, where the French soldiers mutinied against their officers and refused to fight; but at length, on January 24, 1800, the Convention of El Arish was signed, which permitted the French to evacuate Egypt with all the honours of war.

The Egyptians were delighted, and a final imposition of 3,000 purses on the inhabitants of Cairo was paid with alacrity, since it was 'to hasten the departure of the French.' But a despatch from Admiral Keith,[1] dated January 8, was already on the way to inform Kleber that he had received positive orders from his Majesty not to permit the French to leave Egypt unless they surrendered their arms and the ships and stores of the port of Alexandria.

Sir Sidney Smith was almost as much disturbed at this turn of affairs as Kleber himself, and wrote to protest against this undeserved humiliation being inflicted on the

[1] Commander of the British fleet in the Mediterranean.

French army, but to no effect. Kleber absolutely refused to evacuate the country on these terms; and as the Turkish Pasha pressed upon him to withdraw from Cairo, and reminded him that the time allowed by the convention had already expired, he prepared once more for battle. He had already been reinforced by the French garrisons from Upper Egypt, and on March 20 he engaged the Turkish army in battle at Heliopolis and completely routed them. But unwarily he pursued them as far as Salahieh, and meanwhile another revolution broke out against the French in Cairo. Nasif Pasha, the commander-in-chief of the Turkish army, had only simulated flight, and while the French were in full pursuit of the Grand Wuzir he entered Cairo by a detour and took possession of the town in the name of the Sultan. He began by a massacre of the Copts and a pillage of all the Christian quarters. In particular, a Moslem fanatic raged through the whole town, searching for Christians, stripping the women naked, and cutting off the heads of the children. This terrible state of things had lasted two days before the French began to return, and it was known that they had been victorious at Heliopolis. All those who could, among the Copts and Syrians, escaped over the wall and took refuge in the French camp. Access to the river was cut off by the French, and Nasif Pasha would have consented to evacuate Cairo, but the fanatical party were in the majority, and he dared not go against them.

Boulac was taken by the French and given up to pillage and massacre, and then an entrance into Cairo was effected by mines. 'This night,' says Gabbarti, 'was the most terrible we ever spent. The French carried matches composed of oil and spirits of wine, and set fire

wherever they passed.' Kleber ordered that Cairo should be illuminated for three days in honour of his victory, and meanwhile he imposed a fine[1] upon the town of 12,000,000 francs! Moreover, he now allied himself with Murad Bey, the chief of those Mamelukes whom the French had come to Egypt to destroy. Murad was permitted to retain peaceable possession of the whole of Upper Egypt on condition of assisting the French against the Turks.

The French had been abandoned at a critical moment by one general; they now lost, at a still more perilous juncture, another by assassination. On June 14 Kleber was walking after breakfast in the garden of General Damas, when he was murdered by a fanatic in the pay of the Janissaries. The command of the French army devolved upon Menou, who had really done what so many of the French professed to do—become a Moslem, and married the daughter of a low-class Cairene.

He began by removing Generals Lamisse and Damas, who were obnoxious to him, and dismissing all Christians, whether Frank or native, from the Divan of Cairo. Even the taxes were henceforth to be collected by Moslems, and the personal estates of the French in Egypt were made subject to the Moslem laws of inheritance.

On February 23, 1801—the Turks having entirely failed to dislodge the French from Egypt—an English fleet, bearing an army of 15,000 men, anchored in the Bay of Aboukir. This was still less than the number of

[1] Jacob, one of the principal Copts, who had held out in his own house against Nasif Pasha for three days, was charged with the collection of this fine. Gabbarti draws a moving picture of the poverty which the unfortunate Moslems were reduced to by this fresh exaction.

the French army in Egypt (24,000 of whom were afterwards brought away from Egypt), who had also the advantage of being acclimatised. The English landed, in spite of General Friant and the 15,000 men who were posted to receive them, and made their way towards Alexandria. A severe action was fought a few days later, when the French had received their reinforcements, in which the English lost 1,100 men. In spite of this, they held their ground, and reinforcements were summoned in haste from Alexandria.

On their arrival under Menou another bloody battle was fought, and the French fell back on Alexandria, having lost 1,700 men. But the English had to mourn the loss of their general, Sir Ralph Abercrombie, who refused to pay any attention to his wound till the battle was over, when it was too late. He was succeeded by General Hutchinson, who on March 25 was reinforced by 6,000 Turks, among whom was the captain of an Albanian troop who became afterwards the ruler of Egypt, Mohammed Ali.

Events proceeded rapidly. On April 19 the French garrison of Rosetta surrendered to the Anglo-Turkish army and gave up their arms. Menou was shut up in Alexandria, which the English had isolated by cutting through the narrow ridge between the Bay of Aboukir and the bed of the ancient lake of Mareotis, which has remained a salt lake—or, rather, marsh—ever since. Rahmanieh was abandoned by the French, and exaggerated news of their losses caused a fresh panic in Cairo. On the other hand, the French published a proclamation to assure the inhabitants of Cairo that Menou was shortly returning in triumph; that many of the English were

dying of dysentery, ophthalmia, hunger, and thirst; that some of them had deserted to the French; and that the latter had only withdrawn from Damietta to lure the English to their more complete destruction. The native Christians were this time prepared for the worst, and intended to sell their lives dearly. The Copt Jacob, who had fortified his house and held out against the Moslems during the three days' massacre of Nasif Pasha, now prepared to defend the whole quarter. For a long time he had occupied himself in training the Copts to resist any similar attack and to defend their lives and property. He recruited a large body of his countrymen, and drilled and armed them after the manner of the French. Most of these young men were recruited from Upper Egypt, and all responded to Jacob's appeal with the greatest alacrity. Jacob pulled down several of the lately ruined houses in the Christian quarter[1] and constructed with the material a strong wall, with towers, all round the quarter. At the two great gates he maintained regular sentinels, 'upright, with their arms over their shoulders, after the manner of the French,' says Gabbarti. Owing to the heroic efforts of Jacob, the Christians were spared the horrors of a fresh massacre on the reoccupation of the country by the Turks. But the ruined quarter was only useful as a fortress, and it was abandoned when the position of the Christians in the country was strong enough to enable them to do so. Jacob himself, indeed, did not dare to remain in his native land when it reverted to the

[1] This quarter was afterwards deserted by the Copts, and the present one built in what was then a suburb of Cairo. The old churches of Harat-el-Roum and Harat-el-Zawilah, with their surrounding precincts, are all that is left now of this old Coptic quarter.

Turks. He and many of his soldiers left Egypt with the French, and died in exile some years afterwards.

To add to the misery of the unfortunate town of Cairo, there was a frightful outbreak of plague, and in one month 500 of the French garrison died. In Upper Egypt it was still worse, and many towns were deserted. Murad Bey fell a victim to the plague at Beni-Souef, and Ibrahim Bey, a broken-down old man, voluntarily surrendered himself to General Hutchinson.

On June 10 the French issued a proclamation to Egypt in which the following words appear:—

> Learn once for all that Egypt has become definitely a French possession. Get this idea well into your heads, and believe it as absolutely as you believe in the Unity of God.
>
> Be not deceived by the invaders who approach; they can do absolutely nothing. These English are Atheists and robbers; they have no other object than to sow discord among the nations and excite them to hate one another.

On June 16 the combined force of the English, the Ottoman army, and various Mamelukes who had joined them, invested Cairo. On the 22nd, as they were on the point of making a general attack, the French general proposed a conference, during which hostilities were suspended. On the 26th the convention was signed by which the French army of Cairo agreed to evacuate that town and to leave Egypt by Rosetta. On July 10 the whole French army filed out, and the English took possession. General Hutchinson, however, whose instructions were not to conquer Egypt but to drive the French out of it, handed over Cairo to the Turks, and marched himself to Rosetta to superintend the embarkation of the French. Eleven hundred soldiers and 3,000 civilians were sent off from

Rosetta, but a good many French soldiers deserted, having really become Moslems, and therefore desiring to remain in the country.

This division of the French army being disposed of, General Hutchinson next marched on Alexandria and besieged the rest of the French under Menou. They had had ample time to prepare, but apparently had not done so, for on August 29 they capitulated to the English, and on September 2 a convention was signed by which they were permitted to leave Egypt at once.

The English were inclined to insist on retaining the collections and drawings made by the members of the French Institute which Napoleon had established in Cairo, but yielded to the urgent representations made by the French *savants*, who had in vain appealed to Menou to exempt their scientific treasure from the treaty of capitulation. This Institute was indeed the one real triumph of the French invasion. All through the follies, intrigues, and disasters of this ill-fated expedition this little band of Frenchmen had worked and studied, had drawn, inquired, and collected; and the published results of their labours are still among the most valuable material for a study of Egyptian history. Of outward and visible signs of the French occupation of 1798–1801 there remain but a few windmills, for the most part falling into ruin, on the dust-hills of Cairo; a few inscriptions cut here and there on the rocks of the Nile, and a few cannon-shot still lodged in the shattered walls of some of the principal mosques.

It had not been contemplated that the expulsion of the French from Egypt would be so easily accomplished, and a body of 6,000 Indian troops under General Baird had been ordered to Egypt to share the expected campaign.

But though General Baird travelled swiftly across the country from Kosseir to Kenneh, and down the Nile through a curious but welcoming population, he arrived too late for any fighting. The Indians reached Cairo only just in time to see the French army march out of it, and remained for some weeks camped at Rhoda, before they sailed down the Nile to Rosetta.

The worst sufferers from the French invasion were, as usual, the native Christians. It is true that, in spite of their profession of Islam, the French soon realised the necessity of employing the Christian natives for offices of trust, and that they were permitted an equality with the Moslems, which filled the latter with profound disgust (Gabbarti cannot contain his wrath when he speaks of their being allowed to ride horses and to bear arms, like the Moslems), but in the struggles for the possession of Cairo which took place at the beginning of the end, and in the revolts which broke out against the French during the occupation, they were always the first to suffer; and by the end of the time their quarter was plundered and ruined beyond repair, so that those who survived were compelled to build a fresh one and a new cathedral after the French had gone.

The Egyptian Patriarch at the time of the French expedition was Mark VIII., and the following is a quotation from the Coptic record of his Patriarchate. We learn in the beginning that he was a native of Tammah, a monk of St. Anthony, and elected by the Heikeliet to the Patriarchate. On his accession his name was changed from John to Mark.

During his bishopric there were many afflictions and many adversities; and this chiefly—that two years after his coming to the Chair a multitude from the Frank countries,

called the French, came and took possession of Egypt. The inhabitants of Cairo rose against them, and there was war between them for three days. Then the Patriarch changed his house from the Harat-el-Roum to the Ezbekieh. Then a Wuzir from Turkey came accompanied by certain English folk, and they drove out the French from Egypt. The people suffered very much at the hands of the French : many places were laid waste, and many of the churches made desolate. The Patriarch also suffered many adversities, for which cause he left Harat-el-Roum and came to the Ezbekieh, where he built a large precinct and a large church in the name of St. Mark the Evangelist. This is the first who inhabited the Ezbekieh. He was always repairing churches and monasteries which were in ruin ; and was ever awake to preach to the people, and to teach them night and day. Moreover, he consecrated many bishops. And when the Metropolitan of Abyssinia died, and certain monks and priests came with a letter from the King of Abyssinia asking a Metropolitan, Marcus consecrated for him one who went with the Abyssinian priests, and also sent to them books of sermons and of doctrines because he had heard that certain of them had become heretics.[1]

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The Greek Patriarch of Alexandria at the time of the French occupation was Parthenios, a native of Patmos, who probably fled from the country, as no indication of his presence in Egypt can be discovered. The Pope's Vicar in Egypt was Matthew Righet, but the Roman Catholics were no better off than the Greeks or the Copts during the French occupation of the country.

[1] From the translation by Mr. Butler.

CHAPTER XL

MOHAMMED ALI

A.D. 1802 A.M. 1518 A.H. 1217 THE Turks lost no time in offering up the usual holocaust of blood which marks their accession or return to power in every country. Even before the departure of the English two massacres, one at Alexandria and another at Gizeh, still further reduced the number of Mameluke Beys. At Alexandria, indeed, the Turkish Pasha made use of General Hutchinson's name to induce the Beys to accept an invitation, which he well knew they would else refuse. Having embarked with them in a barge on pretext of a visit to the English general on his ship, he made some excuse to leave them in a small boat, and an attempt was made to murder the whole party. Fortunately the Mamelukes trusted the English good faith against the Turkish oaths. Seven of them were overpowered and slain, but the rest, though wounded, flung themselves into the sea and swam straight to the English vessels. 'The English,' says Gabbarti, 'were indignant. They entered Alexandria and drove out all the Turks. They shut the gates and manned the fortifications, and part of their army called upon the Turks to come out and fight. But they answered that they had no quarrel with the English, and remained in their tents.' He adds with evident astonishment and admiration that the English not only cared for the wounded Beys, but that

they buried the slain with military honours, 'as if they had been English dignitaries.'

Nothing astonished the Egyptians so much as the moderation and good faith of the English. Gabbarti is unable to understand why, when the whole country was at their feet, they should have left it to the Sultan instead of taking it forthwith. He records a discussion which the Moslems held on this subject, and decides that it must have been the special favour of God for the Moslem faith which caused him to blind the English to their own self-interest and neglect such an obvious opportunity. In particular the unfortunate Christians suffered horribly. Turkish troops were quartered upon them, who plundered and outraged them at their leisure. Three of the principal Copts were put to death by the Pasha, probably because they had assisted the French against the Turks, since no reason is stated. All their property was confiscated, and a little later Moallem Malati, the Copt who had filled the office of judge under the French, was also beheaded. All those who could took flight from Cairo and went into hiding. Again and again enormous sums were demanded from the half-ruined community as fines or ransom. After the departure of the English matters became much worse. Page after page of Gabbarti is full of detailed statements of the tyranny of the Turks and the atrocities which their soldiery committed with impunity. Six weeks after the English left the country, in May 1803, a violent revolt broke out, which drove the new Turkish Pasha, a young Georgian freedman named Khosref, from Cairo; and Tahir Pasha, who had informally succeeded him, was murdered twenty-two days later.

It was at this juncture that Mohammed Ali came to

the front. This remarkable man was a native of Roumelia, the ancient Macedonia, and one of the many striking facts about him is that, though free-born, he became supreme in a country where none but slaves had ruled for centuries. He had distinguished himself already in battle, and his Albanian troops, also men of Macedonia, were devoted to him all his life. Already he perceived that the road to sovereignty lay before him, and he began by allying himself with the remaining Mamelukes, who were at least less detested than the Turks. With their aid he seized Damietta and took Khosref prisoner. A new Pasha, Ali Pasha Gazailli, was sent by the Porte, but in 1804 was banished by the Mameluke party, and slain on his retreat into Syria. In the same year a Mameluke Bey surnamed Elfi, who had been on a visit to England, returned to Egypt; but, as he at once put himself at the head of a party against Mohammed Ali, that general attacked him without waiting for the opposition to assume dangerous proportions, and Elfi Bey barely escaped with his life to the protection of a Bedouin chief. On this the English Consul demanded an interview with Ibrahim Bey and Osman-el-Bardissi, and declared he would no longer remain in a country governed by men who could conduct themselves in such a manner. He solemnly withdrew from Egypt, and the French Consul proposed to do the same, but was persuaded to remain. Immediately afterwards Mohammed Ali inflicted a fine of 200,000 dollars on the Egyptian Christians, in order to obtain money to pay his troops. Fifty thousand were to be paid by Moallem Ghali, the chief steward of Elfi Bey, who was a Roman Catholic Copt; 30,000 by the inheritors of Victor, the steward of El

Bardissi, who had just died; and the rest by the Copts of the National Church.

After this, Mohammed Ali, with whom no consideration of honour ever for a moment outweighed those of self-interest, suddenly surrounded and attacked the house of his principal Mameluke ally, Osman-el-Bardissi Bey, who had been the Circassian slave of Murad Bey. El Bardissi fought his way out with his Mamelukes, and escaped by the desert under cover of the dark. Still too wary to assume openly the supreme power, Mohammed Ali sent for an Ottoman officer, Ahmed Pasha Kurshid, Governor of Alexandria, and caused him to be appointed Pasha of Egypt. Upon him fell all the odium of extracting money for necessary purposes from the ruined country, while Mohammed Ali posed as the friend of the people and blamed his tyrannous exactions.

On May 14, 1805, all his plans being carefully prepared, a popular revolt broke out in favour of Mohammed Ali. All the Sheikhs immediately waited upon the latter, and implored him to assume the government. Mohammed Ali affected unwillingness, but complied; and a message was sent to inform Kurshid Pasha that he was deposed. Unlike most Turkish Pashas in such circumstances, Kurshid Pasha showed an unexpected firmness. He answered that he held his commission from the Sultan, and would not resign it at the dictation of his inferiors. He provisioned the citadel and prepared to defend himself.

But Mohammed Ali had laid his plans too well. Turkey was far off, and all Egypt was on his side. He dragged cannon up the Mokattam hills to command the citadel, while he prepared for a regular siege. Both

parties sent off their own version of the affair to Constantinople, and meantime the Mokattam bombarded the citadel and the citadel bombarded the town. The siege continued to July 9, when the answers arrived from the Ottoman Sultan. Kurshid Pasha was ordered to Constantinople, and Mohammed Ali was temporarily appointed Pasha of Egypt, having shortly before been made Pasha of Jeddah. He had not yet reached the height of his ambition, and he knew well the need of caution as well as of courage. Unfortunately his measures of precaution, like those of most Orientals, generally meant treachery and assassination. The two chief Mameluke Beys, El Elfi and El Bardissi, were still at large, and forming dangerous alliances with the wild Bedouin tribes.

Mohammed Ali caused one of his tools to write to the Mameluke chiefs, offering in return for an enormous bribe to admit them into the city on a day when Mohammed Ali and his followers would be outside the walls, attending the ceremony of the cutting of the Kalig. To escape his observation they were to make a circuit of the city, and enter by the Bab-el-Nasr. This would oblige them to make their way to the citadel, right through Cairo, by the tortuous lane which had not yet been superseded by the Mohammed Ali Street.

The offer was accepted, and a very large body of the principal Mamelukes fell into the trap. Mohammed Ali had posted an ambuscade of his faithful Albanians in readiness, and no sooner were the Mamelukes entangled in the narrow lanes than they were surrounded and shot down without mercy.

Some of the principal leaders surrendered on condition that their lives were spared; but the following morning

they were all massacred except two or three, who paid heavy ransoms for what proved to be only a temporary respite from murder. Mohammed Ali now sent for his family to Egypt, and prepared to take root in that country. During the next two years he successfully baffled all the attempts of the Porte to dislodge him, obtaining even, by dint of veiled threats and open bribes, a firman confirming him in his appointment.

In 1806 Osman-el-Bardissi and El Elfi, neither of whom had been his victims in the first massacre, died natural deaths; and though the English made an expedition to Egypt in 1807, which seriously threatened his newly-acquired sovereignty, they came more to reconnoitre than for any other reason; and finding a strong man in power, who might be trusted to keep both the Mamelukes and the Turks in order, they retreated after a few months' occupation of Alexandria.

From this time until 1848, when, owing to the increasing failure of his mental faculties, the government devolved upon his son, Mohammed Ali not only ruled but possessed Egypt; for in 1808–10 he successfully accomplished a repetition of the tremendous acts of spoliation for which Sulieman II., son of the first Ottoman conqueror, had given him a precedent. By one means or another, in great measure by the deliberate confiscation and suppression of title-deeds, he possessed himself of almost the whole of the land in Egypt, and declared that henceforth he was the sole owner of the soil, and all rights of possession or tenancy must be held from him. From every class in every town and province of Egypt came a passionate outcry against this wholesale robbery, but Mohammed Ali, with his terrible army of Arnouts at his back, stood firm; and the unarmed

population of Egypt submitted, as usual, to a tyranny which they were powerless to resist.[1] Still, however, there remained in the country a sufficient number of the old Mamelukes to make Mohammed Ali feel that he was not yet absolute lord of everything and everybody in Egypt, and he resolved to sweep them also from his path.

In February 1811 he ordered an assembly of all the troops to witness the departure of his son Toussoun Pasha, who with 4,000 men was about to proceed to Arabia against the Wahabi reformers in that country. It was arranged that he was to go up in state to the citadel to receive the garment of investiture which marked his assumption of the command, and a grand military procession was formed to accompany him. A reception was held by Mohammed Ali in the great hall, afterwards pulled down to make room for his mosque, and coffee was served as usual. When this was over, the procession was re-formed to go down the steep narrow lane leading to the Bab-el-Azab, which has since been superseded by a broad macadamised ascent. The Mameluke band was last but one in the procession, between a corps of Albanians and one of the regular troops, who had received their instructions. When all the army before the Albanians had passed out, the gates were suddenly shut, and the Albanians, turning upon the Mamelukes, began cutting them down, while the regular troops poured volley after volley from their guns into the devoted band. Except two or three Frenchmen who had turned Moslems and Mamelukes, and who had

[1] A great deal of this stolen property was granted to the Turkish followers of Mohammed Ali, but much of it remained to his descendants. The Domains and the Daira Sanieh estates formed part of the land thus stolen from the Egyptian peasantry.

been on different pretexts prevented from taking part in the procession, not one escaped.

Four hundred and sixty bodies lay, half-naked, choking up the narrow lanes, and the only Egyptian Mameluke who escaped had been shut outside the gate by accident.[1]

Nor were these the only victims. The order was sent through all the land that the Mamelukes were to be caught and killed wherever found, and within a few days more than a thousand of them had been massacred. In Cairo their houses were pillaged and their women outraged by the soldiery, who had thus been let loose upon them. From this time the name of Mameluke has scarcely been heard in Egypt.[2]

Mohammed Ali was too wary and far-seeing to allow the part of the Mamelukes to be re-enacted over again by his own Albanians. After an arduous but eventually successful campaign against the Wahabis, the Albanians showed signs of giving trouble. Their leaders were promptly arrested and exiled from the country, but allowed to take with them the spoils they had acquired. Mohammed Ali reconstituted his army on the European model, and it was officered to a great extent by Frenchmen,

[1] There is a tradition that one other escaped by leaping his horse down the sheer wall from the top.

[2] A certain number escaped southwards. Of these, some probably became slave traders in the Soudan; others seized villages in Egypt, and turned them into strongholds of brigands. In 1812 a band of Mamelukes pillaged Deyr-el-Abiab and burnt 100 parchments, the remains of the ancient library of the convent. But 90 per cent. of the Mamelukes in Egypt died a violent death before they were thirty-five, even when Mameluke rule was supreme in Egypt. Their property, houses, wives, and slaves, if not annexed by the murderer, went to the State, and were all sold for the benefit of the Treasury. Those few descendants of the Mamelukes who lived respectable lives were nicknamed Abdullawi, or Good-for-nothing, and soon became indistinguishable from the Moslem Egyptians.

some of whom had become Moslems. Mohammed Ali was a man of commanding power and ability, absolutely without the restraint of any religious scruple or principle. The aim of his life was to make himself master of Egypt, and he allowed nothing to stand in the way of this absorbing passion. He wished to be a good master, and to do his best for the country on which he had set his foot; and in this he differed from the many Moslem tyrants who had preceded him in Egypt, but no one of them all had succeeded in establishing so absolute a tyranny. He professed Islam, as so many of the greatest tyrants of the world have professed Christianity, because it was the natural and politic thing for him to do, but he was wholly untrammelled by faith in any religion. If a man, or a whole race of men, stood in his way, they were simply swept out of it—by treachery or open attack, as might seem most expedient at the time. He chose the best men for his purposes, with entire disregard of their faith, nationality, or family. Thus he surrounded himself with Europeans and Christians, because he perceived that they were invariably more intelligent, better educated, more energetic, and as a general rule more trustworthy than the Mohammedans. He abrogated all the laws against them, and severely punished any outbreak of fanaticism. At the same time he invariably chose, if possible, Armenian, Roman Catholic, or other European Christians, since he perceived the possible future danger of allowing the Copts of the National Church to obtain any preponderance of influence in the country which they never forgot was their own by inheritance. His real Minister of Finance, though not with that title, was that Moallem Ghali who had been secretary and steward to Elfi Bey, and

had his house sacked and plundered in consequence. But Mohammed Ali constantly listened to false accusations against Ghali for the sake of the money which could be thus extracted from him, and in 1821 he coolly issued an order for his murder. Some say that Moallem Ghali had incurred his displeasure by furnishing the Sultan with a truthful report on the finances of Egypt; some that his crime was a remonstrance when ordered to obtain forced and illegal contributions from certain villages in Lower Egypt; but, by whatever means, he made it Mohammed Ali's interest to get rid of him, and he was murdered accordingly in the presence of Ibrahim Pasha and Tobia Bey, Ghali's own son, without any pretence of a trial or any formal accusation.

His Minister for Foreign Affairs was Boghos Bey, an Armenian Christian, who was afterwards succeeded by Artin, of the same nationality. His navy, no less than his army, was trained and officered by Frenchmen. The English being the only Power whom Mohammed Ali really feared, he employed them as little as possible; but he was compelled to send to England for many of his civil engineers.

Having crushed the Wahabis in Arabia and established his power on an unassailable basis in Egypt, Mohammed Ali next turned his attention to the Soudan. Since the downfall of the Christian kingdoms in the latter half of the fifteenth century, there had been no settled government in the great district lying between Wady Halfa and the north-western frontier of Abyssinia. The petty Kings of Senaar, negro by race and Moslem by religion, had claimed a nominal authority over Nubia since early in the sixteenth century; but, as a matter of fact, the Soudan was in the hands of a group of Arab slave

traders who lived by the wholesale robbery and plunder of a dependent population, among whom the traces of Christianity were few and far between. Mohammed Ali, though without religion himself, knew well its value as a political engine, and sanctified his projected expedition in the eyes of his Moslem subjects by sending with the troops three Ulemas, with special instructions not only to prevail upon the Soudanese to profess Islam, which a large proportion of them did already, but to acknowledge that unquestioned obedience in temporal as well as in spiritual matters was undoubtedly due to the Kaliph.

In June 1820 a flotilla of 3,000 boats left Cairo on this expedition to the Soudan, under Ismail Pasha, a son of Mohammed Ali, while a force of cavalry was despatched by land to join them at Assuan. The expedition penetrated with little difficulty to Dongola, Berber, Shendy, and finally to Senaar, where they found remains of the ancient civilisation planted there by Egyptian Christians [1] as far as certain arts and manufactures were concerned.

Arriving at Senaar during the usual Oriental quarrel between two brothers for the succession to the crown, the Roumelian invader had little difficulty in disposing of both claimants. A deposed king was withdrawn from prison and replaced on the throne as a vassal of Mohammed Ali,

[1] It is popularly supposed that the ancient Christian Church had become extinct in the Soudan long before this century; but, though in great misery and secrecy, a remnant of the faithful endured still in certain districts down to our own times. When Gordon went to Khartoum in 1885, there was still a native Christian bishop of the Egyptian Church in Khartoum who had seven churches in his diocese and a convent of nuns. He brought the latter down in safety to Cairo before Khartoum fell, and has since lived in retirement; but what has become of his churches and their congregations under the Mahdi is yet unknown. (Note in 1897: the Bishop of Khartoum died this spring.)

and thus the annexation of the Soudan was accomplished. It remained nominally a part of the Egyptian dominions until 1886, but was never a peaceful or profitable possession, though under good government it could easily have been made one. But the fate of the successful invading general, Ismail Pasha, showed how little real hold the power of Egypt had on the Soudanese. On his return march Ismail Pasha, by his exactions and insults, so offended the native ruler of Shendy that the latter determined to get rid of him. He surrounded the dwelling in which Ismail Pasha and his servants were asleep, and burned it to the ground. Not one of the inmates escaped.

The increasing weakness of Turkey and her occupation with the affairs of Greece rendered the Sultan incapable of interfering with his too powerful vassal in Egypt. Greece, after a slavery which had lasted well-nigh as long as that of the Egyptians, now set them an example of rising to recover her national freedom—an example which they have not yet ventured to follow.[1] Mohammed Ali readily found occupation for the greater part of his troops by sending them to assist the Sultan in his wars, and occupied himself with the development of Egypt, which he had reduced to the position of his personal estate, and was therefore naturally desirous to improve. His genius was great, and, in spite of the terrible blunders which his ignorance led him to commit, the material prosperity of Egypt was much improved during his reign. He reintroduced the cultivation of cotton, and revived other industries

[1] Arabi Pasha, though he managed to impose on many English people, was only a military adventurer of the type which has been unfortunately common in Egypt for the last thousand years. His success would have been the greatest possible misfortune to the country. There has been no great national rising in Egypt since the ninth century.

which had died out under the blighting rule of the Turks. He dug new canals—notably the Mahmoudieh of Alexandria—and established hospitals and medical schools under French instruction. At the same time he wasted enormous sums in the endeavour to establish unprofitable manufactories, and pulled down ancient Egyptian temples all over the country to build factories, which in some cases were never even used. He made the roads of Egypt safe, and the towns for the first time for many centuries were put under regular and more or less efficient police protection and supervision. Owing to him, the trade and mail routes were once more resumed across Egypt to India and the other countries of the East. Moreover, he set up a printing-press on a large scale at Boulac, which published translations into Arabic of European books at very low prices, in order to further the spread of knowledge among the Egyptians.

With all this Mohammed Ali kept steadily before him his great aim—absolute independence in name as well as in reality, and in 1831 he considered that the time for action was come. The Porte was exhausted by the risings in Servia, Bosnia, and Greece—backed as they were by France, England, and Russia—and Mohammed Ali seized upon some flimsy pretext for invading Syria.

Gaza and Jaffa were taken without resistance. Acre, after a gallant defence of six months, surrendered on May 27, 1832; and Ibrahim Pasha, who commanded the invading army, marched on Damascus, fought a pitched battle with a Turkish army which the Pasha of Tripoli led against him, and gained a complete victory. All Syria lay at his feet, but he did not pause in his victorious career. In December 1832, 30,000 Egyptians under

Ibrahim put 60,000 Turks to flight at Konieh, and only the intervention of the Powers, who did not wish to see a new and stronger Moslem Empire rise upon the ruins of the old, stopped the advance of the victorious army on Constantinople. Under pressure, therefore, the Sultan concluded a peace with Mohammed Ali, confirming him in the government of Syria, and giving Ibrahim the additional office of Collector of the Revenues in Adana.

The government of Syria was reorganised on much the same lines as that of Egypt had been.[1] Absolute toleration was enforced for Druses, Maronites, and all sects of Christians. The men best fitted for Mohammed Ali's work were employed, irrespective of nationality or religion. The Jews only, though not openly persecuted, were not freed from their disabilities or defended from private acts of oppression.

In 1834 a rising of some of the mountain communities of Syria, which was repressed by Mohammed Ali in person, afforded the discontented Moslems an excuse for terrible atrocities against the Jews; and the Christians of Nazareth, Bethlehem, and Jerusalem would have shared the same fate had they not defended themselves until help came from Egypt.

In 1835 cholera raged in Egypt for several months with terrible effect. A French physician, Clot Bey, who gave his name to one of Mohammed Ali's new streets in Cairo, excited the warm admiration of the Pasha by his heroic conduct on this occasion.

[1] It is said that the Moslems of Damascus complained to Ibrahim Pasha that the insolence of the Christians was becoming so great that they even appeared in the streets on horseback. Ibrahim coolly advised the malcontents to ride camels, if they wished to be mounted in a superior manner to the Christians.

Among the many European visitors for whom Egypt was a far safer and pleasanter residence than for the Egyptians came the well-known scholar Mr. Lane, whose book on the Modern Egyptians, though it would have been with more truth entitled Modern Cairenes, should still be read by everyone. It is, however, only valuable for knowledge of the Moslems, among whom he lived from 1825-28, and again from 1833–35. As he identified himself entirely with them, the Copts not unnaturally looked upon him with suspicion; and with the exception of one man who seems to have tried to win his favour by abuse of his own countrymen, Mr. Lane was unable even to obtain speech with them. It is scarcely wonderful therefore that he managed to procure but little information about them, and that for the most part inaccurate.

In 1838–39 Mohammed went on a visit of personal inspection to the Soudan, principally with a desire to ascertain the truth about the reported gold mines, and during his absence Sultan Mahmoud thought it a favourable opportunity to make war upon him. The English Ambassador, Viscount Ponsonby, in vain represented to him the suicidal folly of such a proceeding; the Sultan rushed on his own destruction. A battle fought at Nezib in June 1839, left the Turks totally defeated, but Sultan Mahmoud died before the news reached him. His son Abd-el-Hamid was proclaimed at Constantinople, and on the same day the Turkish fleet, commanded by Ferzi Pasha, after dressing the ships and firing salutes in honour of their new sovereign, set sail for Alexandria, where the treacherous admiral had covenanted to deliver the fleet bodily into the hands of Mohammed Ali. Captain Walker, a British officer attached to the Ottoman fleet, was, of

course, kept completely in the dark; and when on their arrival at Alexandria they were received as friends by Mohammed Ali, he refused to return on board the Turkish fleet, and declared his intention of going back alone to Constantinople.

Mohammed Ali, however, had now to reckon with a more formidable obstacle to his plans than any he had yet encountered—the opposition of the Great Powers, and particularly of England.

To give all the reasons which influenced the European Powers in their decision would need too lengthy a digression, but it is very evident that Mohammed Ali, restricted to his allotted task of governing Egypt and the Soudan, was likely to do some real good; while Mohammed Ali, flushed with the dream of universal conquest, and overrunning country after country with troops little better than the Turkish savages, could do nothing but harm. The Allied Cabinets therefore, having resolved to put a stop to his further proceedings, agreed on the course to be adopted; and the British Government despatched Colonel Hodges from Servia to intimate their decision to Mohammed Ali.

Towards the close of 1839 Colonel Hodges landed in Alexandria, but it was not until all courteous hints and suggestions had been tried, without effect, that, in January 1840, Mohammed Ali was plainly told by the English representative that his continued projects of ambition could not be sanctioned or permitted. If he would undertake to confine himself to Africa, no objection would be made to his building up as magnificent an empire as he pleased; but as far as Europe or Asia were concerned he could not be permitted to establish himself in either.

Mohammed Ali, like so many Orientals before and since, did not recognise the language of command under the guise of a courteous intimation. He refused to believe that England was in earnest, and talked about his 'rights,' thus drawing upon himself a stern reminder from the British Government that he had no 'rights,' except those derived from the Sultan and the consent of the Powers, which might be at any moment withdrawn. All representations proving useless, however, Colonel Hodges ceased in March to hold any communications with Mohammed Ali, and on July 15, 1840, a convention was signed by England, Austria, Russia, Prussia, and the Porte. That part of it which referred to Egypt provided that Mohammed Ali should be offered the hereditary Pashality of Egypt, guaranteed by the Powers, and should further be permitted to retain possession for his life of Acre and Southern Syria. But if these terms were not accepted, within ten days from the date of communication, by Mohammed Ali, the offer of Acre and Syria would be withdrawn; after twenty days he would be considered to have forfeited all right to the government of Egypt or Syria.

In August 1840 the Commissioner of the Porte, Rifaat Pasha, was received in audience by Mohammed Ali, and communicated to him this ultimatum, and on the following day the Consuls of the four Powers waited upon him to signify their concurrence in the terms proposed. But Mohammed Ali trusted in France to help him, and, though he did not in so many words refuse the terms, he prevaricated and delayed, wishing to gain time; and when at the end of twenty days he was asked for his formal decision he asked for more time, and could not believe that the Powers would really do what they had said. He

was soon undeceived. Before the end of the year all Syria was in the hands of the Ottoman troops, with Sir Charles Smith as general in command. The ships of England, Austria, and Turkey blockaded the Syrian and Egyptian coasts, and France abstained from the interference which Mahommed Ali considered she had given him a right to expect. On November 21 Commodore Napier arrived at Alexandria, and shortly after sent a severe official letter to Mohammed Ali, in which he clearly intimated that the Pasha would yet be allowed to retain Egypt if he made his submission without delay. Mohammed Ali understood better now what such hints from the English might mean; and he gladly signed a preliminary agreement drawn up by Napier and the Consul on November 27, by which he agreed to restore the Turkish fleet and to evacuate Syria, on an implied condition that the English would ensure his retaining the government of Egypt. Neither the Porte, nor the English admiral, nor Sir Charles Smith was pleased with this agreement, and they complained with some justice that Napier had exceeded his instructions. But the English Government was satisfied, and the convention was ultimately carried out. On February 4, 1841, Mohammed Ali, having withdrawn from Syria, Arabia, and Candia, was formally confirmed by the Porte in the hereditary government of Egypt, and during the fifty-six years that have elapsed since that date Egypt has been ruled by the descendants of the daring and able Macedonian adventurer.[1]

Mohammed Ali himself survived the shock of these

[1] During the whole of these events Mohammed Ali permitted the overland route to India across Egypt to be worked as usual, and this act of far-seeing policy did him great good with the English. The Bombay merchants struck a medal in his honour, with a laudatory inscription.

events seven years, but for more than twelve months before his death he was incapable of governing. His good fortune seemed in great measure to have deserted him after the year 1840. In 1843 Egypt was visited by a terrible outbreak of cattle-plague. It became almost impossible to obtain draught-animals for the most necessary agricultural operations, though the horses of the army were pressed into the service. In some cases a camel would be seen yoked to the plough with an ass. In many villages the peasants harnessed themselves to the plough, for in the same year the flood had lasted longer than usual, and less time was left to prepare the ground. In all, about 200,000 oxen were said to have perished. Next year was marked by a plague of locusts, and cholera also raged during the winter and spring.

The Soudan was far from being the better for its annexation to Egypt. Ahmed Pasha, whom Mohammed Ali had appointed governor, was simply a slave dealer on a gigantic scale, with the support of a regular army and a powerful over-lord at his back. Mohammed Ali cannot, however, be charged with complicity in his worst outrages, since only carefully revised reports were sent to him, and the Governor of the Soudan opened every European letter that arrived at Khartoum and burned most of them. The accounts of Ahmed Pasha's slave raids on the unfortunate natives of the outlying provinces would be incredible, if they were not attested by impartial European travellers.

From all these causes, but chiefly from the enormous number of public works which were carried on by the forced labour of the unfortunate peasants, the population of Egypt became yearly more and more impoverished;

and the terrible state of misery and indebtedness to which it was reduced, whilst money was squandered on useless factories or European-built palaces and houses in one or two of the principal towns, came with a sudden shock upon Mohammed Ali when at length his Christian officials in desperation laid the truth before him. The crisis was successfully weathered for the time, but Mohammed Ali was never quite the same man afterwards. In 1846 he received an invitation to go and pay his respects to the Sultan at Constantinople, and this, of course, meant enormous expenditure in bribes and presents to the Sultan and his officials.

The last project of his life was the Barrage, which, though due in original conception to the genius of a Frenchman, waited nearly fifty years before the genius of an Englishman found the way to make it work. The foundation stone was laid by Mohammed Ali in 1847 with great state and ceremony. Towards the end of this year the health both of Mohammed Ali and of his son Ibrahim Pasha gave way. By June 1848, Mohammed Ali was an imbecile, and the government devolved upon the dying Ibrahim. Father and son passed away within a year of each other—Ibrahim dying in November 1849, and his once great father, almost unnoticed, in August of the same year.

But Mohammed Ali had laid the foundations of his family too securely for death or even imbecility to have the usual effect in Oriental countries, and Abbas, grandson of Mohammed Ali, succeeded his uncle Ibrahim without a dissentient voice.

CHAPTER XLI

THE ENGLISH OCCUPATION

A.D. 1854
A.M. 1570
A.H. 1270

THE history of the last fifty years in Egypt has been so well and so often written that only a short chapter will be necessary here to bring the thread of history down to the occupation of the country by the English. Abbas Pasha was the son of Toussoun Pasha, and, fortunately for Egypt, his reign did not last more than six years. His influence was entirely retrograde, and his private character was bad. He was strangled in his own harem in the year 1854.[1]

Said Pasha, who succeeded him, was the son of Mohammed Ali, and like him in many ways. Both under Said and under his more brilliant and unscrupulous successor Ismail, the development and at the same time the impoverishment of Egypt went steadily on—for, with true Oriental instinct, they began at the wrong end ; nor had either of them any real attachment to the Egyptian proper, whether Christian or Moslem, or any desire to benefit the poorer classes. Forced labour was habitually demanded from them for the costly works which excited the admiration of the Europeans ; and the taxes reached

[1] His cruelty in the harem was exceptional. With his own hand he sewed up the mouth of a female slave whom he found smoking, and left her to starve slowly to death.

such a point that the whole agricultural population became in debt to the Greek money-lenders, who advanced the money necessary to satisfy the demands of the Government.

To Said Pasha, however, is due the credit of having, under French guidance, interested himself in the wonderful records of a long-past civilisation with which the ruined country of Egypt was strewn. Mohammed Ali had pulled down the ancient temples for building material, or turned them into powder magazines. Said founded the museum at Boulac, and carried on excavations at Tanis, Sais, Themis, Kynopolis, Bubastis, Athribis, Heliopolis, Memphis, Sakhara, Abydos, Dendera, Thebes, and Edfu. In his reign also the railway was made from Alexandria to Cairo, and from Cairo to Suez. The misgovernment of the Soudan continued, and the slave trade was carried on briskly throughout Egypt. All through the reigns of Said and Ismail, Europeans—principally Greeks, Italians, and French—poured into the country. It was they who really benefited by the exploitation of Egypt; for the Egyptians little or nothing was done. The Copts were still permitted to enjoy the freedom and toleration which had been accorded to them by Mohammed Ali, and were put on a level with the Moslems in another respect, which they did not greatly appreciate. Ever since the Arab conquest in 642 no Christian Egyptian had been allowed by their Moslem rulers to bear arms; and after the suppression of the last great Coptic revolt in the ninth century it had become almost impossible for any Copt to obtain them. The special taxes which they paid, not to speak of the irregular oppressions and exactions, supplied the fighting bands of alien soldiers with the sinews of

war; but no Copt was ever permitted to enlist in the various armies of occupation, and it may be safely affirmed that none of them wished to do so. The fighting spirit of their ancestors was not, perhaps, entirely extinct, as Jacob had shown; but there is not as much of it among the Copts as one would wish to see. Still, it is grossly unfair to conclude, as Englishmen have often done, that sheer cowardice is at the bottom of the Copt's desire to escape military service under his Moslem masters. In the first place, he can never feel sure that he will not be called upon to turn his arms against his own nation and co-religionists; for the Moslem armies of Egypt have always been far more often employed in ill-treating the unarmed native Christians than in fair fighting against a common enemy. And when Said Pasha declared that henceforth all Egyptians, without distinction of religion, should be liable to military conscription, the decree was used as an instrument of persecution against the Christians. In Assiut *all* the males in some of the Christian houses were seized, not one being left to support the women and children. Once in the army, they were exposed to a regular system of bullying and persecution, in order to force them to change their religion. They had no hope of promotion, any more than they have now in the new Egyptian army.[1] So great was the misery inflicted on the Copts by Said Pasha's decree that the Coptic Patriarch—Cyril the Reformer—appealed to the English,[2]

[1] Though most of the English officers are unaware of the fact, it seems to be thoroughly understood among the natives that, whatever means it may be necessary to employ, no Copt is to be promoted beyond a certain grade.

[2] Sabbatier, the French Consul-General, had offered to use French influence to help the Copts, if the Patriarch would issue an order

and pressure was put upon Said, not by the English Government, but by certain Englishmen whom the Pasha feared to displease; so that the Copts were once more exempted from military service. But the affair was not forgotten against the Patriarch, and for this and other attempts to help his people he was poisoned by order of the Government. Hundreds of Copts belonging to the National Church were dismissed from Government service. Abbas had suppressed most of the schools established by Mohammed Ali; Said took the pupils from those that were left, for his army; and the library which Mohammed Ali had begun to collect was ruined and thrown away.

Said died in 1863, and was succeeded by his nephew Ismail, the son of Ibrahim Pasha. To him chiefly Egypt owes the crushing load of unprofitable debt which would have long ago ruined any country less richly endowed by Nature, and which brought even Egypt to the verge of bankruptcy. Ismail Pasha had the same passionate desire for self-aggrandisement which characterised his ancestors, and was as little troubled with scruples of any kind. Incidentally his pursuit of fame and luxury gave much to Egypt: additional railways and canals, post and telegraph system, schools, and security for life and property—except when murder or robbery happened to be for his own individual self-interest. Almost his greatest personal expense was his harem, which amounted to nearly 1,000 women in different palaces built with borrowed money for their occupation.[1]

admitting Jesuits to settle in Abyssinia. Cyril knew what this meant, and refused to purchase safety for his Egyptians at such a price.

[1] These unfortunate women would most of them have starved when Ismail was dismissed from Egypt, if it had not been for the charity of Tewfik.

The American war brought a few years of feverish prosperity to Egypt. The demand for Egyptian cotton was almost unlimited during these years, and the growers received prices which they fondly imagined were going to last for ever; but in the end many of them were ruined, and many more were left hopelessly in the power of the Greek usurer.

The most splendid, the most costly, and (to the Egyptians) the least useful achievement of Ismail's reign was the Suez Canal. It was a great French triumph, a great English convenience; but for the Egyptians it has been a doubtful benefit, purchased at the cost of thousands of lives. Ismail not only squeezed the last farthing out of the wretched peasantry, he borrowed in every country which he could get to lend him money; and when it became evident that, unless strong measures were taken, neither principal nor interest would be forthcoming, the bondholders worked on the great Powers of Europe to interfere. Various expedients of financial control were tried, but Ismail proved incorrigible.

It was the great German Chancellor who eventually took the initiative. Decisions were given in the International Tribunals[1] in favour of the German Government, which claimed certain sums from Egypt. Ismail ignored the decisions and refused to pay the money. Bismarck proposed to make this the excuse for Ismail's dismissal, and neither France nor England chose to interfere, while Turkey was powerless to do so. The intimation was given on June 19, 1879, and after a stifling *khamsin* week,

[1] These courts are one of the real benefits conferred on Egypt in Ismail's reign. The credit of their establishment is chiefly due to the well-known Christian Prime Minister, Nubar Pasha.

during which the European residents waited in suspense, the news spread in Cairo that Ismail had yielded. On the 26th the fallen ruler descended after a formal abdication from the citadel, and Tewfik reigned in his stead.[1]

Tewfik is a unique character among the Moslems of various dynasties who have ruled in Egypt. He was habitually misunderstood during his life, and even since his death but scant justice has been done to him. Both the Europeans and his own people found it difficult to believe in anyone so unlike the usual product of his surroundings and education. His self-restraint was taken for stupidity; his hesitation to strike sharply in defence of his personal interest or safety was taken for weakness; his sincere endeavour to work well with the conflicting elements around him for the good of his country sometimes laid him open to the charge of insincerity. He was a good Moslem, yet he was entirely free from the intolerance of all other religions which has become a part of the Moslem creed; and he risked unpopularity with his co-religionists to put down the *doseh* and other popular abuses of the Moslem religion. He was devoted to his one wife, in whom he found a companion and helpmeet; yet he showed pity on the hundreds of unfortunate women whom his father abandoned, and did his best for them. When his father sent for him on the morning of June 26th, he, in common with his whole household, believed that he was to be poisoned, in order to remove the nominee of the Powers from his father's path. His wife entreated him

[1] Tewfik was not the heir according to the old Moslem law, which makes the eldest male of a family succeed. Ismail had bribed the Porte to allow the Viceroyalty of Egypt to descend to his eldest son, with whom nevertheless he was always on bad terms.

with tears to escape while there was yet time, instead of going to his death; she even, it is said, ran away with his clothes, in order to render his going out impossible. But, whenever Tewfik had no doubt about his duty, there was no hesitation in his movements. Years later he quietly refused the invitation of the English admiral to seek safety on board an English ship (in 1882), though he knew that he could not depend on a single man of those who were left with him, and expected all that day to be assassinated at any moment by his mutinous soldiers. During the terrible days which followed the bombardment of Alexandria, Tewfik drove almost alone through the streets, trying to restore confidence and order among the panic-stricken. It was only due to his chance recognition by a young Englishman whose father was in the Egyptian service, and who sprang forward just in time to stop the firing of a cannon, that he escaped with his life even then. It was his untimely death in 1892 that rendered the abandonment of the country by the English morally impossible. Rarely has a greater contrast been presented between two state funerals than between these two, which followed each other in the same country at so short an interval—the funerals of Tewfik and his father. The former, as we all know, was entirely unexpected; there was scarcely time to issue the necessary orders for a state ceremonial. But, on that one occasion only, this strange mingling of nations and religions which we call the Egyptian people was moved by a common sentiment of sorrow. The crowd lined all the streets, dense and silent; if a boy's voice was heard, it was hushed by one consent till the procession drew near, when a universal sound of sorrow ran like an electrical thrill through the waiting

masses. Everyone was there; not only the officials but the merchants had hurried from their offices, the sailors from their boats, to join the national mourning. Some of the English who sadly watched the plainly covered bier borne above the dense crowd had seen all that there was to see of official and religious processions for a long series of years in Egypt, and had thought that nothing could sober or touch the chattering, indifferent Cairenes. They learned their mistake that day.

When Ismail died and the news came that he was coming back to be buried, the consternation among a large proportion of the natives was ludicrous. To begin with, they refused to believe that he was dead, and openly lamented that the English were so easily imposed upon. 'You said he should not come back for the rest of his life' was the burden of their remarks; 'then, of course, he dies —to come back with his own funeral. What is easier? Have you sent *English* doctors to open the coffin before it is landed and make sure that Ismail is inside? No. Then you will see what will happen. Ismail is coming back with his own funeral, and when he is once in the country he will seize it again; and then what shall we do?'

Everyone knew what was going to happen, and all who could do so kept away from the state funeral. Even those who were compelled to attend slipped away at different points along the route, and by the time the procession entered Mohammed Ali Street it was a mere disorderly rabble of chattering followers, who were manifestly either indifferent or hostile in feeling. He was hastily deposited in the unfinished mosque of Rifaiyeh, and the whole country rejoiced to believe that his body was really there and his power of doing mischief at an end.

On the other hand, it was partly the virtues of Tewfik which endangered his throne. The rebel Arabi and his immediate friends had already fallen into disgrace for insubordination and corruption under Ismail, but he had been received back into favour towards the close of the latter's reign, had been promoted to the rank of colonel in the army, and had taken a solemn oath to stand by Ismail to the death. Forty-eight hours afterwards Arabi went to offer homage to Tewfik as the new Khedive of Egypt. Tewfik, on coming to the throne, made it known that everyone should receive amnesty for the past and be given a fresh chance. Arabi might perhaps have been content with forgiveness and promotion; but the Turkish Beys and Pashas, who had always been accustomed to set laws at defiance and oppress the lower classes with impunity, saw with dismay that Tewfik intended loyally to co-operate with his European advisers in the regeneration of Egypt. They determined to use Arabi as their tool to upset the dynasty and, as they fondly believed, to rid themselves of European control. In this attempt they were greatly assisted by the well-meaning efforts of certain English tourists, who really believed that Arabi was the leader of a genuine national party, and loudly proclaimed their sympathy. Owing to their injudicious conduct, the rebellious party in Egypt were led to believe that England and France would not interfere, nor was the conduct of their respective Governments calculated to dispel that impression. All through the winter of 1881–82 the situation was becoming daily more strained. The bearing of the native soldiers became more insolent and threatening, and the old days of insecurity returned. English ladies were not safe from insult, and constant stories were rife of intended massacres. For some weeks,

under secret instructions from the Agency, we lived each with a small box packed with necessaries, ready to draw together and stand on our defence at a moment's notice.

In April and May, however, no overt action having yet been taken by the rebels, people began to think that, after all, the revolt would be confined to declamation instead of deeds, and most of the residents went home for the summer as usual.

Those who remained were rudely undeceived. The outbreak and massacres of June 11, 1882, are fresh in everyone's memory, and there is no need to recapitulate the painful details. Tewfik came down from Cairo, but, though he did not hesitate to expose himself, he could do nothing, for he was almost alone. He had good reason to believe that England and France would abandon him to his fate, and he affected to credit Arabi's denial of complicity in the massacres, believing him to be the only person strong enough to restore order, and knowing that the Sultan was backing Arabi and the rebellion. Indeed, on June 25 Arabi received the Grand Cordon of the Medjideh from the Sultan. Meanwhile the Europeans were flying from the country in thousands. The ships, sent from all the nearest ports in haste, left as fast as they filled; the trains from the interior were loaded on the very roofs with passengers. As many as 4,000 arrived on June 15 alone. Trade was paralysed; the banks prepared to transfer their staffs to the warships, which sailed from all nations into the harbour; 30,000 natives were thrown out of employment and left destitute in Alexandria. Not only the natives, but all the more respectable Arab and Turkish families hastened to leave the country and disassociate themselves from the rebellion. Arabi, much

alarmed, perceived too late the mistake he had made, and attempted to put Alexandria in a position of offence against the avenging warships of the European Powers. The Khedive was offered safety on an English ship, but refused, saying that he could not desert those who remained faithful to him (though all the army was against him), nor could he, merely to secure his personal safety, abandon Egypt if attacked by a foreign Power. He was left, expecting instant assassination at the hands of his mutinous army, though Sir Auckland Colvin went again on July 10 to beg him to reconsider his decision.

On the 11th, after vainly seeking the co-operation of France, England took action alone. The whole day her guns fired upon the forts of Alexandria, and by the evening they were all silent and disabled. Most unfortunately, no bluejackets were landed after the action to take possession of the town, and the consequence was that for two days it was turned into a Pandemonium by those of the mutinous soldiery who had not obeyed the order to withdraw, and the lower classes of the town. The streets were filled with a raging mob, shouting 'Death to the Christians!' and pillaging everything they could lay hands on. Houses were set on fire, and the conflagration became general. The Grand Square was totally destroyed except the English church, and most of the houses in the principal European streets. When the English forces did land—on the 13th and 14th—Alexandria was in an appalling condition.

From this time, however, there was no further failure or delay. The Suez Canal was occupied by the British navy in August, just in time to prevent its destruction by the rebels, and troops rapidly arrived from England to follow up the attack. After several skirmishes, of which the

most amusing accounts were sent by Arabi Pasha to Cairo, the final and decisive battle was fought at Tel-el-Kebir on September 13. The Egyptians were completely routed. Arabi fled to Belbeis, caught a train, and arrived at Cairo the same evening, where he occupied himself in arranging a scheme for the destruction and plunder of the whole city, to begin on September 15. But the English had realised what would happen, and were too quick for him. A small division of cavalry was despatched on the 13th, under General Drury Lowe, immediately after the battle, and rode the sixty-five miles to Cairo, where they arrived about four o'clock on the next afternoon. The garrison at Abbasyieh, more than 6,000 strong, surrendered unconditionally on the first summons. But there were still nearly 4,000 at the citadel. Colonel Watson was sent on immediately with two squadrons of the 4th Dragoon Guards to take the citadel. The men had been in their saddles since daybreak, and it was now dark; but they knew how much depended on them, and were equal to the occasion. They rode up to the gates, sent for the Egyptian commander, and demanded his instant evacuation of the fortress. The Egyptian infantry were paraded in regiments to lay down their arms, and then passed out of the gates in front of the handful of English soldiers. As soon as the last of them had filed out, the English soldiers rode in and shut the gates. We learn from a letter written by one of the privates who shared in that memorable ride that it was all they could manage to do to sit upright on their horses till the last Egyptian soldier was out of sight, and then they just dropped from their saddles and lay like logs on the ground. But there was still the Mokattam fort to be taken, which commanded the citadel.

Emboldened by experience, Colonel Watson sent one of the Egyptian officers who had acted as a guide, and told him to go and order the garrison there to march down to Kasr-el-Nil and pile their arms. The officer returned in two hours with the keys of the fort, and reported to Colonel Watson that his orders had been carried out.

Meanwhile Arabi had spent these two days in sending telegrams to Mahmoud Sami, translations of which will be found in Mr. Royle's account of the campaign. They are very amusing reading, especially his inquiries as to where the army which he had abandoned at Tel-el-Kebir might be. It had absolutely disappeared. In fact, the unhappy Fellaheen who had been forcibly recruited to fight for an adventurer in whom they had neither faith nor interest had raced home to their respective villages with as little delay as possible, strewing the way with their clothes and accoutrements that they might not be recognised as soldiers. At Kafr Dowar, Abukir, and Rosetta the troops also surrendered without a struggle. Abd-el-Al at Damietta refused at first, but yielded on hearing that the English were marching against him. On September 17 the Khedive signed a decree disbanding the army, which for the most part was already back in the fields. The English occupied all the abandoned posts and took charge of the country, where they have remained ever since.

This is no place to enter on a consideration of all the reasons which induced England to occupy Egypt or to remain there. It is not generally known, however, that the promptitude of the English not only saved Cairo from destruction and the Europeans from serious danger, but averted a fresh outbreak of persecution against the Copts,

most of whom were fully aware of the danger of their position, and many of whom were preparing for the martyrdom which would certainly have overtaken them had Arabi succeeded. Long afterwards an Englishman, travelling in the desert churches of Nitria, found a solemn form of thanksgiving in Arabic which had been offered in the churches for the coming of the English. Almost all the talking classes of Egypt dislike us and wish to get rid of us, for reasons which we cannot discuss here, but of which no Englishman need be ashamed. And the great silent masses of patient, hard-working Egyptians, whether Moslems or Copts, dare not say that they are thankful, and would not, if they could—from the same superstitious fear which leads many Europeans to shun any expression of feeling which might provoke the jealousy of the gods.

Nevertheless, the facts are there to speak for themselves, and he who runs may read. Orientals have short memories, and the generation just out of the new schools knows nothing of the old days—the taxation which left the cultivator just enough to keep him alive to work and pay another year; the forced labour without pay; the *kurbash* used right and left, often in sheer wantonness; the crops left standing till they were ruined, because there was not enough money to bribe the Government assessor to come and do his work; the life-giving water taken for the rich, while the poor were left to starve, as in the year 1879. The old order of things has passed away; the new is by no means perfect, but it is an advance. It takes three generations, they say, to make a gentleman; it cannot take less to make a nation.

CHAPTER XLII

THE CHURCH OF EGYPT IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

A.D. 1809
A.M. 1525
A.H. 1224

At the beginning of the present century the Church of Egypt was at her lowest ebb, both in numbers and fortune. In every successive conquest, down to the invasion of the French, the unfortunate Copts (or Christians of the National Church of Egypt) had been the first to suffer, and all through the Ottoman dominion increasing poverty had been added to the miseries of chronic persecution. Under the Mameluke Sultans, though their lives were passed in the daily chance of plunder and persecution according to the humour of their oppressors, they were at least employed in the lucrative exercise of the arts which they had preserved. They built the beautiful mosques which are quoted as examples of Saracenic architecture; they in many cases illuminated the manuscripts which are now collected and exhibited in the Khedivial library. No doubt preference was always given to a Moslem Copt for such employment where possible, but most of the Egyptians in losing their religion seemed to lose also the artistic knowledge which their new faith taught them to despise. The wood-carving, inlaying, and brass work on a small scale for private houses was still carried on, but the art of painting had entirely died out, and after the Turkish conquest of Egypt there are very

few public buildings of any architectural value, nor any such beautiful manuscripts as those which the Egyptian artists of the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries were well paid for producing. One or two private houses of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries show lingering traces of the beauty of workmanship which had once been so common in Egypt; but even when the Macedonian dynasty of Mohammed Ali became supreme the process of degradation in this respect was not checked, but rather accelerated. French taste at its worst dominated the new *régime*, and there was less demand than ever for the artistic handicrafts in which the Copts excelled. The business capacities of the ancient race were alone valued, and they became more and more reduced to the level of mere Government clerks. At the time of Mohammed Ali's accession to power the number of Egyptian Christians was at its lowest. Lane was misinformed when he estimated them at 150,000 only; but in 1855 the Patriarch calculated that their total number was barely more than 217,000. The whole population of Egypt was then about 5,000,000. It has been already pointed out that their position was greatly changed for the better under Mohammed Ali; and since then, in spite of drawbacks and occasional outbursts of persecution, it has steadily continued to improve.

If the National Church was at a low ebb at the beginning of this century, the Greek (or Melkite) Church was far worse. In the eighteenth century it had almost ceased to exist. A string of names is given for the successive Patriarchs; but only one of them, Samuel, who was consecrated about 1710, is more than a name. They were all foreigners, and probably few of them lived in Egypt.

They had no bishops under them, and few priests. But after the accession to power of Mohammed Ali, they also began to revive; and their Patriarch Hierotheus, who was consecrated in 1825, seems to have lived among his people, who numbered about 5,000 in all, and to have been much respected by them. His relations with the National Church were friendly, and his funeral, which was remembered for its magnificence, was attended by Coptic ecclesiastics. But on his death, which took place in 1846, there was a strife between the ecclesiastical authorities of Constantinople, who supported a strong party in Egypt, and a smaller but more respectable body of Egyptian Melkites, concerning the successor to be appointed, which again threw the community into confusion.

During the whole of the first half of the nineteenth century the throne of St. Mark was occupied by Peter VII., who succeeded Mark in 1809 and did not die till 1854, one of the longest Patriarchal reigns on record. He was a man of high character, much interested in the new developments of his time, and genuinely anxious to raise his Church and people from their melancholy condition. But the proceedings of the Roman Catholic missionaries, who in the eighteenth century had at length managed to establish a genuine Uniat Church in Egypt, principally consisting of Melkites, but also drawing many away from the National Church, had rendered him suspicious of Western influences.

The first time that any real effort was made by a Western nation to help the Church of Egypt,[1] instead of

[1] Earlier attempts by the English had all been made in favour of the Greek (or Melkite) Church in Egypt, and had ignored the National Church.

adding to her troubles by attempts to proselytise among her members, was when the Rev. Henry Tattam, whose attention had been attracted to the Copts in the course of his search for old manuscripts, wrote to urge on Archbishop Howley the duty of the Church of England towards this ancient and unhappy Church. The correspondence began in 1836, and was carried on for some years. Before this the Bible Society had published the four Gospels in Arabic and Coptic, edited by Mr. Tattam; and shortly afterwards the S.P.C.K. printed Arabic translations of the old Egyptian Commentaries.

Mr. Tattam was not the first to take interest in the ancient manuscripts of Egypt, though he was almost the first Englishman to urge the National Church of England to come to the help of the downtrodden National Church of Egypt. In 1833 Mr. Curzon had come to the East in search of manuscripts, and visited some of the more important monasteries of Egypt.[1] Like most travellers, he was compelled to receive his information through Moslem interpreters, whose very presence rendered the Copts suspicious; but his personal observations and adventures are full of interest. It was chiefly in consequence of his discoveries that Mr. Tattam was able to acquire so many valuable manuscripts from the Coptic monasteries.

Mr. Tattam visited Egypt himself in 1838–39, and took very great pains to learn something about the National Church and to make friends with its members.

[1] In the monasteries of Nitria he found still hanging in the churches those beautiful glass lamps which are generally supposed to be of Arab design and confined to the decoration of mosques. But the old glass factories of Nitria had long been ruined; and almost all the early specimens of Coptic ecclesiastical glass lamps, from which the Arabs copied theirs, have perished.

Mr. Lieder, who had been sent to Egypt in 1830 by the Church Missionary Society, had also established friendly relations with the Copts, and was able to be of great use to Mr. Tattam and the Archbishop. Mr. Tattam visited the convents of Nitria, and obtained permission to bring away several valuable manuscripts. Among them was a work on the Trinity by Cyril the Great—a copy written in 611, and therefore now about 1286 years old. He also found there more than three hundred 'very old and beautiful' Syriac manuscripts on vellum, besides numerous imperfect books and loose leaves. This extremely valuable remainder of the ancient library of Deyr Suriani was afterwards acquired for the British Museum.

In March 1840, after his return to England, Mr. Tattam drew up a memorandum on the Coptic Church for the Archbishop, giving a short sketch of its condition, and ending with an earnest appeal for help from the Church of England as one peculiarly fitted to influence the Egyptians.

In the winter of 1839–40 another clergyman, the Rev. T. Grimshawe, visited Egypt, and made friends with various members of the Egyptian Church, with the result that he also wrote to the Archbishop urging that help should be given to them, and submitting, in fact, a scheme which he had requested Mr. Lieder to draw up for the establishment of a training college for young Egyptians desiring to be ordained priests of their own Church. This school was actually opened and kept up for a few years; but Mr. Lieder grew discouraged at the comparatively small success of the work, and in 1848 it was unfortunately closed. Even in those few years, however, seeds were sown which were destined to bear fruit in a sub-

sequent generation, and perhaps Mr. Lieder would have been encouraged to persevere had he known that though none of his pupils were ordained priests, as he had hoped, his school produced in course of time the Patriarch known as Cyril the Reformer.

The Church of Egypt had never in her darkest days entirely neglected the education of her children. In every parish there was a school, where they were taught to read and write, if nothing more; but for some centuries now the girls had been left to pick up what they could in the way of education. No regular provision was made for them either at home or in schools. Cyril the Reformer, when he succeeded Peter in 1854, saw the evil of this state of things, and established a school for girls as well as for boys in Cairo, where the education was of a superior quality.

Cyril had been for some years the head of the famous monastery of St. Anthony when he was called, more literally than one could wish, by popular acclamation to fill the Patriarchal throne. Those who had been his fellow-students and knew his desire for a reform of the Church clamoured for his appointment; and when the bishops—in number then reduced to twelve—met in Cairo to elect a Patriarch, they found the name of Cyril in every mouth. But the bishops were old and timid, and hesitated to give supreme power to a young enthusiast who had been educated under foreign influences. It became known that they were about to elect an obscure monk whose very name is now forgotten, and the people rose against them in actual insurrection. Accompanied by armed Abyssinians, they broke into the cathedral where the election was proceeding and stopped it by main force. The poor old

bishops fled from the building, but eventually consented to listen to the representations of the laity, and a curious compromise was agreed upon. No Patriarch was to be immediately elected; Cyril was to be consecrated Metropolitan of Babylon (Cairo) on the understanding that if he proved himself worthy as a bishop he should be shortly afterwards elected to the Patriarchate. The whole proceeding was extremely irregular, since, according to the Canon law of the Church of Egypt, translations are forbidden, and a bishop cannot be elected Patriarch. Nevertheless, the bishops faithfully carried out their compact, and, when due time had elapsed, Cyril was elected to the vacant throne.

Cyril's Pontificate lasted only seven years, of which more than two were spent in Abyssinia. Yet, in this short time he inaugurated that movement of reform from within, which never quite ceased afterward, and has quickened into a living and spreading force in the present generation. Besides the schools he established in connection with the cathedral, he rebuilt the latter entirely. It was of no archæological value, being the small and inconvenient building which had been built in haste—and chiefly by the liberality of one layman—under Mark VIII., when the old Coptic quarter was ruined on the return of the Turks in 1802. As Cyril considered that his people were guilty of idolatry in their worship of sacred pictures, he allowed none to be set up in the new cathedral, and, collecting all those which had furnished the old building, he burnt them solemnly in the presence of an immense crowd. He made them an address on the occasion explaining his action, and ended, as he pointed to the burning pile, 'Behold these wooden pictures you used to honour and

even worship! They can neither avail nor harm you. God alone should be adored.'

We should be inclined to regret this action of Cyril's if it seemed at all likely that any works of art had perished in his great object-lesson.[1] But the art of painting had become almost extinct since the Ottoman conquest, and the pictures which had been executed for Mark's cathedral were probably even worse daubs than those which since Cyril's time have been placed in the cathedral which he built. If they had been beautiful, it is extremely unlikely that they would have been destroyed. For, speaking generally, the Copts have not yet lost their sense of beauty, though the days of their ignorance have almost entirely deprived them of the historic sense. A remarkable instance of this is shown in the work lately carried on at the Roman fortress by Nachli Bey el Barati. This gentleman, a devout layman of the National Church, undertook to restore at his own expense the old cathedral of Babylon which is popularly known as El Moallakah, and its precincts.[2] Every fragment of *beautiful* old work was carefully guarded and replaced, after being so well repaired that it needs careful scrutiny to tell the new work from the

[1] It is strange that, as we gather from this incident, the Copts of Cyril's time were inclined to pay the same kind of excessive veneration to their sacred pictures as the members of the Greek Church. For there is no evidence in times past of any tendency to picture-worship among the Copts; and the Egyptian Churchmen of to-day pay no more attention to the pictures on the walls of their churches than we do to the pictures in our stained-glass windows, while devotional pictures are rarer in the Coptic houses than in our own.

[2] Most of the churches have been restored since the English came, but this was begun earlier, in 1879. The greatest loss it had sustained was due to a tourist, who bribed one of the inferior priests with 100*l.* to let him steal and take to Paris the beautiful sanctuary doors of carved cedar wood. They were afterwards sold to the British Museum.

old. When we remember the acts of vandalism we were guilty of in England at the beginning of church restoration, and consider that El Moallakah is the earliest example of restoration here, we cannot feel proud of ourselves. Yet the English archæologists have hardly a good word for Nachli Bey, who has spent 6,000*l.* of his own money on the restoration, because this lack of historical knowledge has led him into error.

Built on a half-ruined bastion of Trajan's fortress, at a time when safety and, as far as possible, concealment were the first things to be considered in the Christian strongholds, the cathedral had no fit approach, but was reached through a labyrinth of narrow passages leading from the small and sunken gate at the north-east corner of the fortress. Nachli Bey destroyed everything that stood between his new flight of steps and the nearest part of the old wall, and broke a new entrance-way through the eight feet of solid Roman masonry. Nor was this the worst. One of the two great bastions which flanked the old south entrance of the fortress was levelled to the ground in order not to break the outline of a neat new wall, and the second bastion was about to share the same fate when it was happily averted. Lord Cromer heard what was going on, and the fiat which no one in Egypt dreams of disputing went forth. Not another brick of the remaining Roman work has been touched.

Since then, with the full consent of the Copts, most of whom are sincerely glad to be protected from the results of their own historical ignorance, the ancient Coptic churches have been placed under the care of the Committee for the Preservation of 'Arab' Monuments. The Patriarch readily consented that no work of restoration should in

future be undertaken without the consent of two selected members of the committee. Indeed, he begged Lord Cromer to go further, and to issue an edict forbidding the tourists to bully and bribe the guardians of the churches in order that they might plunder them of the ancient artistic treasures which still exist in some of them. Lord Cromer was obliged to confess that his power did not extend over the tourists, who now constitute the only serious danger to the antiquities of the Church of Egypt. The priests generally resort to the attitude of impenetrable reserve and depreciation which the tourists mistake for absolute ignorance and stupidity.

The work which the Church of England, as represented by the Church Missionary Society, had abandoned in the year 1848 was taken up the year after Cyril's accession to the Patriarchal throne by America, as represented by the Presbyterian Mission, which has been at work here ever since. Like the Church Missionary Society, they came, in the first place, not to help the Copts, but to convert the Mohammedans, and, like all missionaries in this country, they find the work among the Mohammedans so slow and discouraging that, though they do not abandon it, as a matter of fact their pupils and converts are mostly drawn from the National Church, which, not unnaturally, strongly disapproves of them in consequence. The modern Church Missionary Society establishment, which dates from 1884, is not so much disapproved of, because the Church of Egypt recognises that the Church of England is a true Episcopal Church, and believes that her emissaries are not likely either to teach her children heresy or lead them to acknowledge that supremacy of the Pope of Rome against which the Egyptian Church has

steadfastly protested for more than fourteen centuries. But while they are deeply grateful to the American Presbyterians for the unvarying kindness and help they have received from them, they sincerely mourn the consequent spread amongst the Egyptians of disloyalty and schism. It must always be a lasting source of regret to members of the English Church that the work in the first case given to them was, through their own defection, left to be done by the members of a Church whose constitution is such that its very success must hurt the National Church of Egypt almost as much as its failure would have done. We, who put our hand to the plough and looked back, are the last people who have any right to criticise the methods of the devoted men and women who have borne the burden and heat of the day in this vineyard of the Lord.

Cyril made efforts to bring about a closer communion between the three Churches who have so much in common —the Egyptian, the Greek, and the English Churches— but his proceedings had already drawn upon him the suspicion of the Moslem authorities in Egypt, and this was considered a clear proof of his treasonable designs. He was quietly removed by poison, and a blow given to the cause of reform in Egypt from which it has hardly yet recovered.

Demetrius, who succeeded him, was good and just, but far from being capable of carrying on Cyril's work. The Copts who desired fuller religious and political life joined the Presbyterian Church in large numbers, and those members of the National Church who were sufficiently educated to value her splendid record and episcopal organisation were driven to despair. Demetrius, indeed, excommunicated the heretical Church which was obtaining

so firm a hold in the country, particularly in Upper Egypt, but this was felt by the educated Coptic laity to be neither the most Christian proceeding nor one likely to be successful.[1] On the death of Demetrius they consulted together, and determined that before electing a new Patriarch they would draw up for his signature a scheme for the reform of the Church. The Cardinals of Rome have often tried to bind their future Pope in the same way, and with much the same result.

In the Canons of the Church of Egypt, as collected by Ebn-el-Assal, who lived in the thirteenth century, they found the rule upon which they acted:—

'In all important matters the Patriarch must consult learned and pious men, both priests and laymen (especially persons attached to the Sovereign), singly and collectively. The decisions arrived at must be written down.'

On this ground the Copts, with the sanction and concurrence of Marcus, the Metropolitan of Alexandria, who acted as Vicar-General during this interregnum, drew up a scheme for the institution of a council in every diocese, composed of two houses, one clerical and the other lay, under the presidency of the bishop of the diocese. The lay members were to be elected by general suffrage every five years, and were to supervise the financial and civil affairs of the diocese. This scheme was accepted by all the bishops; but this did not content the laity, and one of their number, said to be Butros Pasha Ghali, obtained a Khedivial decree to establish the proposed council by

[1] Miss Whateley's well-known schools were first started in 1861, the year of the accession of Demetrius. Her work was intended for the Moslems, and she had not very much to do with the Copts, though much with the Syrian Christians.

law. After two years of discussion and experiment the present Patriarch, Cyril V., was elected in 1875, and promised to conform to the decisions which had been arrived at.

For some time the Patriarch and the newly established council worked harmoniously together. A theological college was started in Cairo and placed in charge of Philotheus, the present Dean of St. Mark's Cathedral in Cairo and an unusually able and learned man. But mistakes were made on both sides, and Cyril grew impatient of a control which none of his predecessors had ever brooked. Dissatisfied with the results of its teaching, he abolished the theological college, so that the priests were again left without any special training for their office; and most of the members of the council, finding their advice unheeded and their remonstrances unregarded, ceased to attend the meeting. Cyril was left to govern in the old fashion till 1883, when some scandals connected with an abuse of the privileges of the Church caused an outburst of popular feeling among the Copts. A generation had now grown up which had been educated for the most part in Presbyterian or Roman Catholic schools; and though a large proportion remained faithful, in spite of this early teaching, to the Church of their fathers, still they had learned to be profoundly dissatisfied with her. They clamoured for the re-election of the council; Cyril yielded, the elections were made, the meetings were held, and various decisions were arrived at. But the Patriarch quietly ignored them, and they remained a dead letter.

In 1890 some of the younger laymen formed themselves into a society for Church reform which is called the Tewfik Society—not after the Moslem ruler whom

Christian and Moslem alike respected and loved, but from an Arabic word signifying pioneer. This society began to issue pamphlets in Arabic in the hope of stirring up public opinion among all Copts able to read. Some of these pamphlets have been translated into English by their authors, and are well worth study. The society increased so rapidly and became so influential that the Patriarch and the monastic party, who dreaded change, endeavoured to suppress it. Like all young and ardent men whose horizon is limited to their own experience, the members made occasional mistakes, and these were exaggerated and misrepresented. Cyril intrigued against them with the Government, to whom their aims were represented as treasonable. In this he may have been chiefly actuated by a wish to save his own life, for Cyril well understood what had caused the early death of his reforming namesake; and though the presence of the English here can restrain open violence and persecution, they cannot altogether abolish the secret methods of removing troublesome people. Cyril also started a rival society, called the Orthodox, and the relations between the reform party and the Patriarch became daily more strained. In the spring of 1891 a great popular demonstration was arranged in Cairo, to which came delegates from all the chief Coptic communities of Egypt. Speeches were delivered, and at length a deputation was appointed to wait upon the Patriarch and urge upon him the assembling of the council and the need of reform.

Cyril, like the Popes of Rome, did not see the necessity for any council; and when the deputation became urgent, the old man broke down in tears, and left the room. The people announced a public meeting at the Patriarchate.

Cyril wrote to give information to the Governor of Cairo, and asked for police to protect him and preserve order. He then called a synod of his own, which was attended by all the bishops, the abbots of the monasteries, and the chief priests of the most important churches. He presented to them a paper for signature, the contents of which we have been unable to learn, but they were directed against the reformers, and though most of the prelates, who were all monks and for the most part ignorant, signed without reading the epistle, some of the ablest and best priests refused to do so. Among these were Philotheus, Dean of St. Mark's; Peter, Hegoumenos[1] of Faggala; Joseph, Hegoumenos of Babylon; Peschoi, Hegoumenos of Haret Zawilah; and Abd-el-Melek, Hegoumenos of Abu Sefayn.

All the priests were instructed to cause this epistle to be read aloud in the churches. Then, with some of his bishops, Cyril sought an audience of the Khedive Tewfik and asked his advice.

Tewfik carefully inquired into the whole affair, and respectfully advised the Patriarch to yield. He pointed out that he himself had gone through a similar experience. 'Before the English came here,' he is reported to have said, 'I governed my people after my own fashion, and no one could question or control what I chose to do. It is not pleasant to be set aside and controlled. But when I saw that these new ways were good for my people, then I did not stand upon my rights, but tried to learn them,

[1] Pronounced by the Copts 'Gommos' or 'Kommus.' Almost all their Greek words and names are corrupted; in some cases they can with difficulty be recognised. The English translation of the word would be 'chief priest'; but Hegoumenos or Kommus is in Egypt applied also to the Superior of a monastery.

and submitted to those who would help me to rule well. Go you and do likewise.'

Unfortunately Tewfik died soon afterwards, and nothing was done for some time. Then the reform party appealed to Abbas II. against their Patriarch, and entreated the Moslem Government to issue a decree for the election of a new council. Cyril refused to be present at the elections, which thereupon took place under the presidency of the Governor of Cairo. The whole affair became more and more discreditable to both parties. The original desire for reform was obscured for the time in the struggle for the upper hand, in which both sides appealed to the Moslem Government for support, in clear contradiction to the laws of the New Testament. One bishop only sided with the reform party, the Bishop of Sanabu, whose name was Athanasius. Cyril excommunicated him; and when Athanasius went to the cathedral in Cairo, he found the doors barred against him by the Patriarch, who had gone to Alexandria. Eventually, the reform party succeeded in getting their Patriarch exiled to Nitria, and John, the Metropolitan of Alexandria, to the desert monastery of St. Paul.

This action of theirs was 'not only a crime but a blunder,' as they soon discovered. The religious feeling of the nation was shocked, and their sympathies alienated from the reform party.

Athanasius, who had had no share in the exile of his Patriarch, was called upon to act as vicar in his absence. He determined, however, notwithstanding the irregularity and invalidity of the sentence of excommunication, to respect it until he could be released from it legitimately, and by his wisdom and moderation did much to bring the

reform party back into the right path. The council appointed four committees—one to supervise the schools, another to receive the Church funds and look after her property, a third to examine the condition of the churches, and a fourth to regulate the ecclesiastical courts. But their conduct to the Patriarch and the fear of excommunication had so frightened the bulk of the nation that they held aloof from the reform party, and even from the churches. Athanasius, after trying by every possible means to induce Cyril to remove the excommunication, determined to disregard it. His personal virtues did much to restore the confidence of the people, and in great measure he succeeded. But in a short time Riaz Pasha came into office, and he looked with great disfavour on any signs of reviving life among the Copts. He did his best to annoy them, and finally the older members of the Church council agreed that their wisest course was to submit to their own Patriarch and ask for his recall. Athanasius quietly resigned his vicarial office, and Cyril entered Cairo in a triumphal procession as of a returning conqueror. Moslems and Christians alike poured out to welcome him back with music and acclamations. His people insisted on unharnessing the horses from his carriage and themselves dragging him to the Patriarchate. The crowd was so great that men climbed the trees, the lamp-posts, or anything that could afford them a vantage, and all traffic in the streets leading to the Patriarchate was stopped.

It was a touching demonstration of the deep-seated loyalty which the nation feel for their Patriarch, and it is very much to be regretted that Cyril did not use his triumph wisely. But he seemed at first to have learnt nothing, and to be incapable of a magnanimous effort to

start fresh on his return to power with forgiveness for the past and conciliation for the future. It was with the greatest difficulty that he was persuaded to be reconciled to Athanasius and the priests who had refused to bind themselves not to accept reforms. He would neither recognise the council nor suffer it to continue the work it had begun. He declared it to be illegally constituted, which was true, and renewed his own unlawful dealings with the Moslem Government. He even accepted the decoration of the Grand Cordon of the Medjideh from the Turkish Sultan, in return for his effort to discourage reform and the growth of national aspirations among his own people! He dissolved the council, but he did at least choose four of its members to associate with himself in the administration of affairs until the elections for a new Church council could take place. The theological school was even reopened, but it was placed in the charge of men entirely unfit for the work, and the old ecclesiastical abuses went on unchecked.

In the few years which have elapsed, however, since the re-establishment of Cyril's power, we are glad to record that there has been a steady change for the better in the affairs of the Church of Egypt. The Patriarch and the reform party have begun to perceive that the Church of Christ can neither be maintained nor reformed except in the spirit of Christ, and each party has shown a desire for peace. The incompetent teachers at the theological college have once more been replaced by men capable of teaching and not unwilling to receive new light. Some few men have already been licensed to preach from this school, and it is hoped that they will form the pioneers of a new and better generation of clergy. Much, of course,

cannot be done in the lifetime of the present Patriarch, who is old and timid—afraid on the one hand of being accused of intriguing with the English, and on the other of the heretical tendencies of a generation educated in Presbyterian schools and inclined to be ignorantly scornful of their own Church.

Of the recent Anglican attempts to help the Church of Egypt little need be said. Soon after the occupation of the country by the English, a society was founded called 'The Association for the Furtherance of Christianity in Egypt.' But this society was hampered at the outset by its refusal to accept the necessary position and acknowledge the National Church as the Church of Egypt. It sought the co-operation of the Patriarch, while denying his orthodoxy; and at an early meeting of the society one of the principal speakers took occasion to proclaim that the Association would refuse all tolerance to the 'soul-destroying heresy of the Copts'! Naturally the society has been able to do very little in Egypt, and is regarded with distrust by both parties in the Egyptian Church.[1]

[1] This is the actual teaching of the Church of Egypt on the subject in question, as taken from their authorised catechism:—

'*Q.* Did He (the Saviour at His incarnation) separate Himself from the Father and the Holy Ghost?

'*A.* God forbid that any separation or removal be attributed to Him, for He is the Eternal and Infinite Word of God, who cannot reasonably have become separated from God and His Spirit; but by His condescension is meant His accepting, although eternal, to appear on earth in human form in order to save man, His creature, and make him attain by His incarnation the high position of happiness in His kingdom. And yet He was never separated from the Father and the Holy Ghost.

'*Q.* What is the meaning of "He united himself"?

'*A.* That the Son of God took His manhood (*i.e.* His Body and Soul) and made it with Him one, personal, and substantial union, above mixture or confusion, or transubstantiation, or separation. By this

Nevertheless, there is a wide field of work in Egypt where help is greatly needed. But it can only be done by those who are willing to face the facts of the case, and to lay aside the prejudices of the fifth century in dealing with the problems of the twentieth.

Including the Bishopric of Khartoum, there are thirteen sees now existing in the Church of Egypt, of which six have still the title of Metropolitan or Archbishop. There are 837 priests of her communion and about 375 churches still in the provinces, which, with the churches of Alexandria and Cairo, bring the total up to 418. Besides this, there are several important monasteries and three convents of nuns.[1]

real union of substance He became one person, one distinct substance, with one nature, one will, and one action, *i.e.* the one Incarnated Son.

'*Q.* What gives an approximate example of this Holy union?

'*A.* The union of the speaking soul with the human body, for the soul is a pure spiritual substance, and the body is a coarse earthly substance. By this mutual union without mixture or transubstantiation they become one person, one substance, one nature. This union of the soul and body in every man gives an example of the union of the eternal Godhead with manhood in the person of the Lord Christ in unity of substance.'

[1] The full title of the Patriarch of the Church of Egypt is: The Most Holy Pope; Patriarch of Alexandria and all the land of Egypt, Nubia, Abyssinia, Pentapolis, and all the Preaching of St. Mark.

The Egyptian Church is called El Kanissa, or to outsiders, El Kanissa Gupti (the Church of Egypt). The Greek Church is called El Kanissa Roumi (the Church of Rome). The Roman Church is called El Kanissa Katolika, or Latina (the Catholic or Latin Church). The English Church is called El Kanissa Inglesi, or Anglikana (the English or Anglican Church). The Presbyterian Church and all Dissenters are comprehended under the general term Protestant.

CHAPTER XLIII

SOCIAL LIFE AND CUSTOMS

A.D. 1897
A.M. 1613
A.H. 1315

WITH the spread of education and the freedom which the Copts have enjoyed of late years, many of their old customs are passing away, in particular those which were foreign to their race and only adopted in times of persecution from the Moslems. Thus, while twenty years ago a Christian Egyptian would have been as much ashamed of being seen with his wife or other female relations as if he were a Moslem, the younger men are now aware that in ancient times the Egyptian women were as free and as much respected as their Western sisters are now, and are anxious to do away with the evil customs borrowed from the Moslems in this respect. Fortunately, this movement of reform seems to be in good hands, and will proceed slowly and wisely as the Egyptian women fit themselves to resume their proper station. So far the Coptic women are trying to copy Englishwomen in the right way, in their intellectual freedom and moral self-restraint, while retaining their own graceful and modest fashions in dress and manners. Before long it is hoped that they will go about freely with their husbands and brothers, or under any other proper escort, and bring an elevating influence to bear on the lives of those around them; but fortunately they do not seem likely to begin at the outside,

as their mankind have often done, and imagine that when they have cased themselves in unhealthy and unbecoming European clothes they have adopted European civilisation. The Coptic women of my acquaintance are for the most part full of natural intelligence, graceful and animated in conversation, and extremely well mannered.

Some of the customs which still exist have an earlier origin; they come straight down from pagan Egypt, and little can be said in their favour. As with all other nations, it is on the occasion of a death that these pagan rites have lingered longest. Immediately after the death the hired wailing women arrive and take possession of the women's apartments, where the scene becomes one of frantic excitement and uproar. Down below, the principal mourners among the men sit silently in the corner of the room to receive the visits of the men, who merely touch their hands on entering, and then take their seats in solemn silence. The only respect in which their behaviour differs from their far-off ancestors is that they smoke the whole time. Meanwhile in the women's apartment the corpse lies upon the floor covered with a shawl, surrounded by the women of the family in their richest garments,[1] exciting each other to a state of frenzy. Their hair is dishevelled and torn; they beat their faces with hands dyed in indigo, and shriek with the wailing women, the beating of whose tom-toms adds another element of unholy discord. Sometimes they fall fainting from sheer exhaustion, but the terrible scene continues till the corpse is removed.

[1] For three days rich and bright-coloured garments are worn by the women of the family; only on the fourth day they put on mourning clothes, which they continue to wear for one whole year. The widow of the deceased wears black for several years.

Among the lower classes the women follow the corpse, shrieking, to the grave, and sometimes even indulge in a kind of wild funeral dance, while the men sit passively round upon the tombstones; but this last rarely happens now, and, it is hoped, will soon be entirely a thing of the past. The Church and even the Government have tried to interfere to prevent these scandalous scenes at funerals, but are powerless to effect any real reform till public opinion comes to their aid.

The funeral procession is generally preceded by the sexton bearing a large silver cross,[1] then the choir-boys carrying flags, after them the priests, followed by the bier and the mourners. The Copts have always buried in coffins, but these are now made in the ordinary European shape.[2] The funeral service is read in the church before the corpse is taken to the cemetery to be buried. The near relations of the dead fast the whole time between the death and burial; immediately afterwards their friends bring them food, and continue to do so on the second day. During all three days the women on the upper storey, and the men on the ground floor, receive the condolence of their friends. The wailing continues among the women, and the hired singers recite impromptu monologues in praise of the departed. On the third day, the priest comes to the house to comfort the bereaved family, who join him in prayer, at the conclusion of which all the rooms of the house are sprinkled with holy water. The women call this (probably representing ancient tradition) the

[1] It is only during the last thirty years that the Copts have been allowed to use their crosses on such occasions.

[2] In Upper Egypt they still bury all the clothes and most of the ornaments of the deceased with them. In Cairo this is no longer the case, though ornaments in wearing are not often removed.

ceremony for dismissing the spirit of the deceased, which is believed to hover about the house until then. But many of the Copts believe, like their pagan forefathers, that the soul remains forty days before its final destiny is pronounced; and that it is weighed in a scale by the Archangel Michael, who here takes the place of Thoth. These forty days of waiting and trial are the only form of purgatory which the Copts acknowledge. But some among them believe that the spirits are let out from Hades, where they await the final judgment of the world, for forty days after Easter; and there is an old Coptic legend which clearly indicates belief in a purgatory not unlike that of the Romish Church at the time when the legend was written. In it Michael is represented as having power, on one day in the year, to open the doors of purgatory and bring out into peace as many of the suffering souls as he can carry on his wings.

The ceremonies of a wedding, on the other hand, are most of them beautiful and symbolic. Unhappily, Moslem influence has affected even these, and till quite lately it was thought improper for a man even to see beforehand the girl he was going to marry, much more to have any personal acquaintance with her. The young people had, indeed, no voice in the matter. Matches were often arranged long before the intended husband and wife were of age to marry. At one time fifteen was considered a suitable age to marry a boy, and twelve for the girl. Already, however, public opinion, backed by the remonstrances of the Church, has improved in this respect, and now a man must be twenty and a girl sixteen before the Patriarch or Bishop will grant the licence without which no priest can celebrate a marriage. In 1895 the Patriarch

issued an encyclical letter to all his clergy reminding them that, in accordance with the Canons of the Church, young people intending to marry should not only see but mix with each other, so as to know one another well, and calling upon the priests to ascertain whether there was mutual knowledge and consent to the marriage on the part of both man and woman before the ceremony was performed.

As soon as a marriage has been arranged, the young man sends to the maiden, by a priest, a gold or diamond ring called El Shabka (or the engagement-ring), and a day is fixed for the betrothal ceremony (or *Jepeniok*). On the evening of the betrothal day the groom, accompanied by a number of his relatives and friends, goes with a priest to the maiden's house, where her relatives are assembled to receive them. All present join in reciting the Lord's Prayer. Then the priest delivers an appropriate speech or sermon, in which he generally alludes to the betrothal of Rebecca to Isaac.

After this the conditions of the civil contract are discussed, the dowry is paid by the bridegroom, and an agreement is drawn up in which the date of the wedding is fixed. The dowry varies in amount, according to the pecuniary resources of the bridegroom; it is usually from 20*l.* to 100*l.* The bride's father generally contributes double the sum paid, and the whole amount is spent in buying ornaments and on the trousseau. After partaking of refreshments, supplied by the groom, the guests disperse. If the date fixed for the wedding be a distant one, the young man is expected to send to his bride-elect from time to time gifts of flowers and fruit. If a festival such as Christmas or Easter intervene, he sends her a robe,

with some cakes and sweetmeats. But he does not visit her himself or correspond with her.

Weddings are generally celebrated on the nights of Saturday and Sunday; but not during Lent, or any of the fasts of the Church, except under very exceptional circumstances. The first, Saturday night, is called the bride's night. In the course of the day the bride goes to the bath with her friends and relatives; at night she is robed in her best, and holds a reception, to which all relatives and friends are bidden.[1] All stay to dinner and spend the evening listening to singers or other people hired to amuse them—for among Orientals it is considered beneath your dignity to do anything to amuse your guests yourself; those who rejoice with you and those who weep with you are alike hired for the purpose.

The house is decorated with flowers and flags, and is brilliantly illuminated at night; but the women and the men remain apart, as with the Moslems. Very often, indeed, the men do not enter the house at all, but a large tent is erected in the garden for their reception. These tents, as well as the china, plate, and decorations, are supplied by contractors called *furasheen*. Dinner is served in the usual Oriental fashion, on large circular metal trays, round which as many as ten people can sit comfortably. Every guest is provided with a napkin, a spoon for the soup, and a cake of bread to serve as a plate, but no knives or forks. The washing before eating is done in public, as with the Mos'ems, and not in privacy beforehand, as with us. Everyone eats with their fingers, but all wait for the most important man at table to begin. If

[1] The Christians stain their hands and feet with henna, as well as the Moslems.

a priest is present, he takes precedence over all others, whatever their rank. He begins by saying grace, and then, taking a loaf of bread, he blesses it, breaks it, and gives a small piece to each person present. As many trays are brought as can be conveniently set out in the dining-hall at once, and the guests are served in relays. The bridegroom does not appear on this first night, but he sends two or three of his nearest relatives with a bouquet of flowers and a wax candle, which must be as long as the bride is tall. This candle remains lighted in the maiden's bedchamber during the whole night.

In the evening of the Sunday—called the bridegroom's night—the *shebeen* (or best man), accompanied by two or three of the nearest relatives of the bridegroom, goes to fetch the bride and escort her in procession to the house of her husband. Some years ago these Christian processions could only venture to move by night, and were then far more effective. The band went first, escorted by torch-bearers; then the men, carrying each a candle in a bouquet; then pages carrying incense burners and perfume bottles, walking backwards, with their faces to the bride; and then the bride, leaning on the arm of the best man and followed by the ladies, with the servants in the rear. Now the bride and her ladies are conveyed in close carriages, preceded by music and escorted by the best man and his friends. The carriage which contains the bride is covered with a shawl or carpet of some value.

On arriving at the house a sheep or calf is slain upon the threshold, and the flesh is given to the poor. This is a custom which has come down straight from the ancient Egyptians. The bride is then taken up to the ladies' apartment by the best man. As the procession leaves the

bride's maiden home, and as it enters the groom's house, it is sprinkled with salt and sometimes with rose-leaves, to ward off the effects of the evil eye. The company rest a little, and light refreshments are served, after which the wedding ceremony takes place.

This service used to be held in the church, but in the days when Christians could be attacked with impunity it became unsafe, and for some time now it has been the custom to celebrate the wedding in the bridegroom's house. Due preparation is made, however, and the service conducted with reverence. A table is set in the centre of the largest room in the house, on which a sealed copy of the Holy Gospels in a silver case is placed.[1] Around this are six silver crosses, to each of which three wax candles are fixed. (The triple light is intended to symbolise the Holy Trinity.) Two armchairs are set in front of the table for the accommodation of the couple about to be married; everyone else remains standing the whole time. The bridegroom is clothed in another room with his wedding garment—a cope of white silk richly embroidered, which covers his whole person.[2] He does not, however, uncover his head, though this is in defiance of all Christian tradition, and the effect of the white robe is marred by the unbecoming red fez at the top. The bride is robed in white, and covered with a thin veil, like an English bride, though I have seen a Coptic bride in the red silk wedding-

[1] Some of these sealed copies have not been opened for four hundred years, and it is not impossible that they may contain copies of great antiquity, sealed up when they could no longer be used. It is a wholesome practice to use silver-cased Gospels, which can be cleaned, for these purposes; and it would be well if the example were followed in our courts of justice.

[2] These copes belong to the church, and are lent for the occasion, like the crowns.

dress of the Moslems. She ought, of course, to be placed in the chair at the right of the bridegroom from the beginning; but Moslem ideas have so far prevailed over Egyptian customs that it occasionally happens that the bride's throne is left empty, and the poor little bride peeps at her own wedding from behind the door. She is not fetched in till the service could not proceed without her, and then none of the other Coptic ladies come with her. Sometimes, however, an enlightened husband keeps her with him after the ceremony, and even introduces her to some of his English friends. The wedding service is not unlike our own, but the custom of crowning both bride and bridegroom (unless either of them have been married before), and covering their heads together with an embroidered scarf, to symbolise a tent, still survives among the Egyptian Christians, and it may be hoped will continue to do so.[1]

After the wedding most of the guests remain to dinner, and spend a great part of the night in the house, listening to singers, &c. It is a point of honour for the host to keep open house on the occasion. No one is refused hospitality. The Moslem dragomans often presume on this to bring in tourists without any sort of invitation on a wedding-night, knowing that, whatever his private feelings may be, the master of the house must courteously entertain his unsought guests. As a rule the tourists who take advantage of their dragoman's intrusion are too ignorant to know whether their hosts are Moslem or Christian, and

[1] Divorce is very rare among the Copts, and is only granted for adultery. The innocent party may marry again with the permission of his or her bishop or the Patriarch; but the religious service is slightly different and the ceremony of crowning is omitted, as it is for a widow or widower.

their behaviour is not calculated to inspire belief in the superior breeding or civilisation of the European visitors to Cairo. They come in, wearing the same shabby, dusty garments in which they have been rushing about all day; they walk about as if they were looking at a waxwork show; they make ill-bred remarks in loud tones, without considering that most of the native gentlemen present understand French and English (though unfortunately they do not always know the difference between English and American); in short, they make the English who may happen to be present as guests of the family extremely uncomfortable. Even those tourists who at least know enough to ask for an invitation to a native wedding, instead of going in with a dragoman, leave so much to be desired in their behaviour when they get there that some of the great Moslem families have announced that *no* invitations will be issued in future to any European visitors.

On Monday, the day after a Coptic wedding, the nearest relatives on both sides spend the day at the groom's house. The bride waits on her company in person, and every guest presents her with some gift, according to his means. This gift may be a diamond or a sum of money from 1*l.* to 10*l.*; and every donor receives in return a handkerchief embroidered by the bride. The friends of the family also contribute gifts in kind towards the wedding feast.

The Copts are devoted to children, and rejoice sincerely at the birth of a son or daughter, especially the former. The mother keeps her room for a week after the birth, however poor she may be; there is always some friendly volunteer to do her work. On the seventh day the name

of the baby is decided in a sort of family council, and, if it is the first-born, a luncheon is given to all the mother's lady friends. The unfortunate baby begins by being put to all sorts of tests—for instance, a gong is sounded near its ears and it is rocked in a sieve! Some of the babies are very attractive. One of the prettiest and best-tempered babies I know is a Coptic baby of some five months old. He has abundant hair, bright blue eyes, and coos and gurgles with content all day, though he is passed round from one girl to another in a way that many English babies would resent. The mother, poor child! cannot be much over fifteen; but I am glad to say she is the only married one among four or five friends and relatives about the same age or a little older. When the seven-days-old baby has been duly startled, the mother, dressed all in white, takes him in her arms, and carries him in a sort of procession all over the house. All the children invited go first, carrying candles or sometimes incense burners, and singing nursery songs. Cakes are made by the parents of the young mother, called *komaga*; and a portion of this cake is sent with sweets and dried fruits to the different families connected with the young couple.

In the evening a water-bottle covered with silk and adorned with jewels is placed in a shallow metal basin. Three wax candles are attached to the edge of the basin, and are given each a favourite name chosen by one of the family. These candles are then lighted, and the one which burns the longest gives its name to the child. Each guest at the ceremony is expected to put a piece of money into the basin, and the collection is presented to the monthly nurse, in addition to what she receives from the father.

According to the rules of the Egyptian Church, a man

child should be baptised when he is forty days old, a woman child waits till she is eighty days old. Unfortunately, however, the observance of this rule is very lax, and children may be found still unbaptised at the age of five and six months. The baptism always takes place in the church, unless the child be dying. It is done by trine immersion in pure cold water which has been sprinkled with a little consecrated oil. The child is no longer girdled with the belt which used to be a distinguishing mark of the Egyptian Christian.

In the Church of Egypt, as in the Church of Rome, the sponsorship is held to constitute a material as well as a spiritual relationship; and marriages between people so related are forbidden, as if they were consanguineous. A young man cannot even marry the daughter of his godfather or godmother, since she is reckoned his own sister. After the trine immersion the child is anointed with the chrism and given the communion. In baptism children receive a second name in addition to the first—generally that of the saint of the day, unless the parents prefer the name of a favourite saint. Girghis and Miriam (George and Mary) are perhaps the commonest names among the Copts.

Besides these Christian names, many Copts in Government service take a third name for common use which is not distinctively Christian, and this often becomes the name by which a man is familiarly known to everyone, his Christian names being used only in the ceremonies of the Church. Thus a man who was christened Marcus is known everywhere as Skander; a lad christened Vassili (Basil) is sent to school as Zeki. Some of the old Greek names have undergone curious changes since the Copts

lost the use of their own language. Philotheus becomes in Arabic Feltaus; Christodulos, Abd-el-Messiah. Victor is now Buktor; and Theodorus, Tadrus.

Circumcision is very commonly practised among the Copts, especially in the provinces. But there is none of the disgusting display which signalises it among the Moslems, nor is it enjoined as a religious rite. It is merely a sanitary precaution, taken whenever it seems advisable. The ancient custom of sacrificing a sheep or calf still prevails on the occasion of laying the foundation stone of large buildings, and the same thing is done on the threshold when the house is completed. The flesh, as on the occasion of the wedding sacrifice, is given to the poor.

The men are much more regular in their attendance at church than the women; and when the latter do go, they appear to talk to each other a good deal, instead of attending to the service. This, no doubt, will be remedied when the women are allowed to resume their proper seats in the body of the church, instead of being relegated to high harem galleries, so placed that it is almost impossible for them to see or hear what is going on. Apparently, before the fear of the Moslems became too strong, the women sat apart from the men, as they do in some English churches, but on the same level, and not screened from view. I have found in one old church four screens. Behind the first were the catechumens, in a space now never used; then the outer court for the women; between the second and third screens the men sat; between the third and fourth, the priests and choir; beyond the fourth were the three sanctuaries, each containing an altar, of which only the middle one is now used.

In the Church of Egypt, as in the Church of England, the rule is that all members should receive the Sacrament (in both kinds) at least three times in the year, of which Easter is to be one. But whereas in England most members of the Church communicate frequently, and only the very careless abstain altogether, it has become unusual now for even the religious members of the Church of Egypt to communicate oftener than once a year—and this, strangely enough, in Lent! A special sweet wine, called *abarka*, is used in the celebration of the Sacrament. It is made for the purpose in the churches. Raisins are soaked in water, then crushed, and the juice is refined and left to ferment. This custom became necessary, owing to the frequent and terrible persecutions. In the ninth and again in the eleventh century (*see* Chapters IX. and XV.) the vineyards were destroyed and the making or importation of wine was absolutely forbidden, with the avowed object of rendering it impossible for the Christians to celebrate their sacred mysteries. Gradually the Moslems succeeded in eradicating entirely the cultivation of the vine and in preventing the importation of wine or fresh grapes. The Christians imported raisins, and made what wine they could secretly in the churches. Now, of course, all the restrictions which made this necessary are abolished, but the Egyptians continue to follow a custom which in its first beginning was held by some rigid ecclesiastics to invalidate the Sacrament. Concerning the vestments and orders of the Church of Egypt we shall write nothing, because it has already been done with the greatest care and detail by Mr. Butler in his 'Coptic Churches.'

To one reproach among the many so freely and recklessly flung upon them by the ignorant and prejudiced

visitors from the West the Copts must plead guilty, without extenuating circumstances.[1] Their churches are rarely cleaned, and their condition in the matter of order and cleanliness is generally disgraceful. There is in most cases a paid servant of the church, but it never seems to occur to him that it is any part of his duty to keep it clean. Still, it must not be forgotten that a hundred years ago our own churches in England were in much the same condition as the churches in Egypt are now. I have before me the recollections of an old lady, in which she describes a state of dirt and disorder in English country churches which might do for a description of the Egyptian churches of to-day—only that in the Egyptian churches we at least should not hear complaints of the women using the leaves of the prayer-books as curl-papers for the adornment of the heads of the young men who sat with them! The Egyptians have already begun to restore their churches; let us hope that at some date in the near future they may realise the duty of keeping them clean.

The Egyptian churches are endowed by the gifts of past and present members of the Church in the same way as the English churches; the offertories are generally very small. But the Egyptian Patriarch has a power something like that exercised by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in England; if he thinks fit, he can appoint a Nazir (or treasurer) to any parish. This official collects all Church dues and rents, &c., and remits them to the Patriarch, who pays a fixed salary to the priest in charge, and applies the surplus of the money to such general Church

[1] Justice compels me to mention one. Cairo, on the banks of an unfailing river, suffers in the poorer districts from a scarcity of water. One of the iniquitous acts of Ismail's reign has left the city helpless in the grasp of a single foreign water company, and the natives suffer.

purposes as he may think fit. It is concerning the administration of funds so acquired that there has been so much dissension between the Patriarch and the reform party. The latter assert, not without reason, that no one man, not even a Patriarch, should be permitted to administer Church funds absolutely at his own discretion and without rendering account of them. They demand that their council of laymen should be consulted in the apportionment of the funds, and in particular that more should be spent on education. The Patriarch, on the other hands, stands by his rights, like the Roman Popes, and with more justice. But it is agreed on all hands that, though the present Patriarch may be unwise and wasteful, he is honest and unselfish in the exercise of his trust. It is to be hoped that on the next vacancy the Egyptians may revert to the customs of primitive Christianity, and choose a learned married priest of tried experience, instead of a saintly but ignorant monk from the Nitrian desert, to be their Papal king.

Though there is much poverty, there is little real want or beggary among the Copts, as the well-to-do do not ignore their poorer neighbours, and those who are earning money consider it a matter of course that they should help to support those relatives who are out of work. Except in the Roman fortress, where the tourists have taught them the evil lesson, there are very few Coptic beggars. Even up the Nile, where almost the whole river population has been demoralised by the tourists, the Coptic quarters are still honourably distinguished by the absence of begging. Sometimes the boys ask for books; but in 1894, when I was last up the Nile, though the howling for backsheesh made the landing-stages unendurable, I still

found civility and silence when I turned aside to the Coptic quarters both at Esneh and Assouan. I did not hear the word 'backsheesh' so much as whispered till I went back again into the Moslem town. Moreover, almost all Copts are brought up to some handicraft or trade, if not to Government service, and are rarely idle. Copts are not often found as domestic servants, unless, as one of them naïvely put it, they are not intelligent enough to do anything else.

Since 1884 the Copts have been free from all legal disabilities, and their only real grievance is the persistent favouritism shown to the Moslems, avowedly on account of their religion, by most of the higher Government officials, English as well as Turkish. As almost all the higher officials with whom the English come much in contact belong to the very class most interested in keeping down the Copts, pains are always taken to represent the latter in an unfavourable light, and the Englishman absorbs the prejudice as naïvely as possible. As a rule, he is firmly convinced—unless it should be necessary to cross-examine him—that he speaks from his own experience, and it does not often occur to him that in his arguments he applies the standard of the New Testament to the Copts, and another standard to the Moslems, much lower than that which he applies to himself. I have spoken of the difficulties thrown in the way of the promotion of Copts in the army, and it is the same in almost every other department. Indeed, one Englishman came to Egypt with the avowed intention of employing none but Moslems (probably under the impression that only the Moslems were the true Egyptians), and carries out his intention as far as possible. It seems that no Copt since the time of Mohammed Ali has been made

the governor or sub-governor of a province, though in some districts it would be the best and most natural appointment. Still, these are but small hardships for a nation to bear which has suffered so much for over a thousand years, and most of the Copts are sincerely grateful for the protection they enjoy under the ægis of our Queen Victoria.

NOTE.

SINCE these pages were sent to press the Patriarch has increased the Episcopate by the addition of seven Bishops. Four of these are the Superiors of the great monasteries of Egypt. Before this time these communities were directly under the Patriarch, and not under the Bishop of the diocese in which the monasteries were placed. The list of Bishops of the Church of Egypt now stands as follows:

1. BASIL, Metropolitan of Jerusalem.
2. TIMOTHY, Bishop of Dakahlieh, Gharbiah, and Sharkieh.
3. JOHN, Metropolitan of Alexandria, Behera, and Menoufieh.
4. ABRAHAM, Bishop of Ghizeh and the Fayoum.
5. JOSEPH, Bishop of Beni Souef.
6. JACOB, Bishop of Minieh.
7. ATHANASIUS, Bishop of Sanabu.
8. PETER, Bishop of Manfalut.
9. MACARIUS, Metropolitan of Assiout.
10. BASIL, Metropolitan of Abu Tig.
11. MATTHEW, Bishop of Akhmin.
12. AGAPIUS (Aghabius), Bishop of Kenneh.
13. MARCUS, Metropolitan of Esneh.
14. SERAPAMOUN, Bishop of Khartoum and Nubia.
15. SIDERIUS (Sidarous), Bishop of the Monastery of Baramous (Nitria).
16. MARCUS, Bishop of the Monastery of St. Anthony.
17. ARSENIUS, Bishop of the Monastery of St. Paul.
18. PACHOMIUS, Bishop of Deyr Moharrak.

In Abyssinia.

19. MATTHEW, Metropolitan.
20. PETER, Metropolitan.
21. LUCAS, Bishop.

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